BUILD YOUR OWN GUITAR
We show you how to make a Martin acoustic with our step-by-step DIY guide

LITTLE STEVEN
Springsteen's guitarist & Sopranos star speaks

WIN! A FENDER DUO-SONIC
WORTH £495 INSIDE!

The Guitar Magazine

NOVEMBER 2017 Vol 29 No 02 **£4.99**

REVIVE YOUR 335

How to get PRO TONE from your GIBSON or EPIPHONE

JOE BONAMASSA

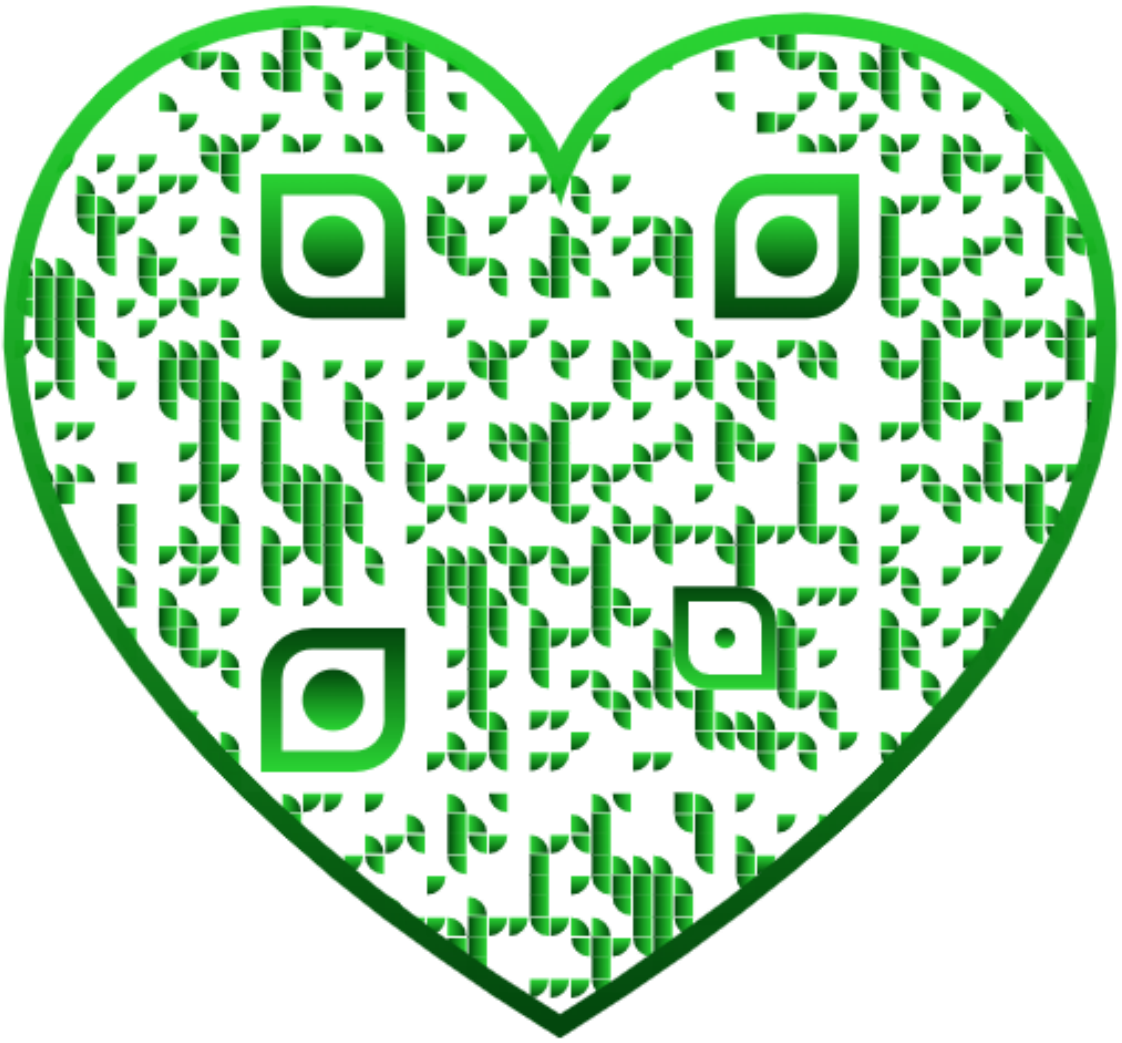
- **New** signature amp
- **New** Flying V
- Three **new** albums!

REVIEWED

Frank Brothers, Eastman, Orange, TV Jones & more

ANTHEM
NOV 2017
Vol 29 No 02
£4.99

VINTAGE | DIY | REVIEWS | INTERVIEWS | TECHNIQUE



Found On Reverb
Handcrafted Serek Basses
BUY | SELL | PLAY
The world's largest marketplace
for musicians, Reverb.com/UK.

The Guitar Magazine

Anthem Publishing
Suite 6 Piccadilly House, London Road,
Bath BA1 6PL
Tel **+44 (0) 1225 489 984**
Email **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com**

www.theguitarmagazine.com

Editor **Chris Vinnicombe**
chris.vinnicombe@anthem-publishing.com

Art Editor **John Thackray**
john.thackray@anthem-publishing.com

Managing Editor **Josh Gardner**
josh.gardner@anthem-publishing.com

Senior Product Specialist **Huw Price**
huw.price@anthem-publishing.com

Digital Editor **Sam Roberts**
sam.roberts@anthem-publishing.com

Contributors **Mark Alexander, Rod Fogg, Paul Gregory, Dave Hunter, Chris Mackin, Lars Mullen, Richard Purvis, Teri Saccone**

Instrument & Cover Photography
Eleanor Jane

Joe Bonamassa cover image
Neil Zlozower

Managing Director **Simon Lewis**
simon.lewis@anthem-publishing.com

ADVERTISING

Business Development Manager **Di Marsh**
di.marsh@anthem-publishing.com

Senior Sales Executive **Joe Supple**
joe.supple@anthem-publishing.com

Ad Production **Craig Broadbridge**
craig.broadbridge@anthem-publishing.com

ANTHEM PUBLISHING

CEO **Jon Bickley**
jon.bickley@anthem-publishing.com

Creative Director **Jenny Cook**
jenny.cook@anthem-publishing.com

Marketing & Production Manager **Verity Travers**
verity.travers@anthem-publishing.com

PRINT & PRODUCTION

Print **William Gibbons & Sons Ltd**
Tel 01902 730011

Distributed by **Marketforce (UK) Ltd**
5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HU
Tel +44 (0) 203 787 9001

LICENSING

Regina Erak **07753 811622**
erak@globalworks.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES

anthem.subscribeonline.co.uk
Tel **0844 322 1291*** (UK)
Tel **800 428 3003** (US Toll Free)
Tel **+44 (0) 1795 414 781** (Rest of World)
Email **guitarandbass@servicehelpline.co.uk**
Calls cost 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge

ANTHEM PUBLISHING

All content copyright Anthem Publishing Ltd 2017, all rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or resold without prior consent of Anthem Publishing Ltd. *The Guitar Magazine* recognises all copyrights contained within the issue. Where possible we acknowledge the copyright holder.

ppa The Professional Publishers Association Member

A tale of two semis

As a dyed-in-the-wool ES-335 player, writing this month's cover feature wasn't exactly a chore. Like many 30-somethings, I first became aware of the model during the Britpop era, and though there were a variety of Gibson and Epiphone semis all over the TV and radio at the time, it was the simplicity of Gibson's dot-neck ES-335 reissue that spoke to me. This was a machine that could take a beating as well as sing sweetly, and the punk-rock influence of Nirvana was still powerful enough to make me deeply suspicious of any electric guitar that appeared to be excessively fancy.

Skip forward a couple of years and a combination of a student loan payment and youthful exuberance saw me order a Cherry finished ES-335 Dot Reissue sight unseen from a magazine advert. It almost certainly wasn't what student loan payments were intended for but hey, you only live once. Imagine being hit by a bus having never owned a 335? I still keep telling myself things like this...

The arrival of my first 'proper' Gibson a few days later was such a big deal that my best mate and musical partner in crime arrived especially for the unboxing. Yet when I opened the case, my heart sank. Why was it so flamey? The one in the Gibson catalogue wasn't flamey! The old ones weren't flamey!

It sounded nice enough but I never really bonded with it. Within a couple of years it was a distant memory, swapped for a Les Paul Deluxe from a man in the Midlands, which was traded for a Firebird, then an SG, that I sold to buy... another ES-335 Dot Reissue. This time in Sunburst, this time an absolute steal as it had suffered a neck break. Flamey, but not too flamey. The repair job was sound so I took the plunge.

Hundreds of gigs and recordings, various radio sessions, TV shows, promo videos, god knows how many gear demos, another neck break and several bands later, I still have it. Even though it's rather heavy, the neck is skinnier than I'd like and I've played loads of superior examples... it's home. And thanks to a set of Tyson Tone PAFs and a Bigsby it sounds better and is more fun to play than ever.
I wonder where that red one is now...

GET IN TOUCH

FACEBOOK
facebook.com/theguitarmagazine

YOUTUBE
youtube.com/theguitarmagazine

TWITTER
@guitarmagazine

INSTAGRAM
@theguitarmagazine

Or email **theguitarmagazine**
@anthem-publishing.com

SUBSCRIBE

Turn to **page 50** to take advantage of this month's special *The Guitar Magazine* subscription offer.

In this issue...

THIS MONTH'S EXPERTS...

DAVE HUNTER

Dave Hunter is a writer and musician who has worked in the US and the UK. A former editor of this title, he is the author of *The Guitar Amp Handbook*, *Guitar Effects Pedals*, *Amped* and *The Fender Telecaster*. Check out his column on p12

HUW PRICE

Huw spent 16 years as a pro audio engineer, working with the likes of David Bowie, Primal Scream and Nick Cave. His book, *Recording Guitar & Bass*, was published in 2002, leading into his career in guitar journalism. He also builds and maintains guitars, amps & pedals

RICHARD PURVIS

A reformed drummer, Richard has been gigging for over 20 years as a guitarist and bassist, and working as a music journalist for almost as long. He also composes music for television, and is legally married to his 1966 Gibson Melody Maker

50 Revive Your 335
Get your Gibson or Epiphone semi sounding and playing better than ever

62 Joe Bonamassa
Joe on Black Country Communion, tweed Fenders and Flying Vs

FEATURES

Essential Mods & Upgrades For Semis 50
Our essential guide to getting more out of your semi

Joe Bonamassa 62
JoBo talks about being back in Black Country Communion, a tweed Twins, and a Flying V with a helluva tale...

Steven van Zandt 68
The Springsteen sideman on solos, Sopranos and more

Novo Guitars 76
Behind the scenes of Dennis Fano's latest project

VINTAGE

Private Collection 10
Duncan Findlay's SGs, jazzboxes and truly unique electric

Vintage Bench Test 26
1960s Watkins Westminster

Classic Combinations 34

Time Machines 44

REGULARS

THE MONEY SHOT 6 | WIN! A FENDER DUO-SONIC 8 | LETTERS FROM AMERICA 22 | NEW MUSIC 36 | SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE 38

86 Brotherly Love

We get to grips with a stunner from Canada in the shape of the Frank Brothers Signature model

96 HONEYBOY

92 EASTMAN

94 ART & LUTHERIE

104 ORANGE

GEAR REVIEWS

Frank Brothers Signature Electric Guitar **86**
Eastman T64/v Antique Classic **92**
Art & Lutherie Roadhouse **94**
Honeyboy Amps 18 & 5 ..... **96**
FX Amps 68 Creamy Overdrive **100**
Orange Fur Coat & Getaway Driver **104**
TV Jones Starwood Tele Pickups **106**
Seymour Duncan PowerStage 170 ..... **108**
Universal Audio Apollo Twin Mk II **110**

WORKSHOPS

DIY Workshop **112**
Huw Price starts building a Martin Guitar Kit 000-sized acoustic guitar

All About... ..... **122**
The long and fascinating history of the humble tuning peg, and how you should choose the best machineheads for your guitar

Chord Clinic **126**
Rod Fogg gets down with diminished 7th chords

The Guitar Magazine

FREE Audio Technica M30X Headphones

WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE

TURN TO PAGE 48

ONES TO WATCH **39** READER'S LETTERS **40** READER BOARDS **42** SUBSCRIPTION OFFER **48** READER'S FREE ADS **125** THE TALKBOX **130**

THE *Money Shot*

1952 GIBSON ES-125

Gibson's ES-125 was went through several different iterations as the Kalamazoo firm refined the Electric Spanish concept. By 1952 when this guitar was made, the pre-war 14.5-inch body had expanded to match the ES-150's 16.25 inches, while the original pickup was swapped for the more familar dog-eared P-90. This gorgeous example is in decent condition for its age, though it's clearly seen a fair chunk of playing in its life. This is borne out by the pro refret job and tuner button replacement, which hasn't done anything to impact its fantastic tone and addictive playability – to hear it for yourself, head to youtube.com/theguitarmagazine. This guitar, along with a lovely vintage Lifton case, was recently sold at Gardiner Houlgate Guitar Auctions for the very reasonable sum of £1,400 plus fees. Visit guitar-auctions.co.uk for more information.

Gibson

0 1 2 3

BUILT LIKE A FORTRESS
Lifton
MADE IN U.S.A.

WIN

A FENDER DUO-SONIC ELECTRIC GUITAR WORTH £495!

Fender first introduced the beginner-focussed Duo-Sonic all the way back in 1956, but since then its compact scale and offset good looks have made it something of a cult curio, and its stripped-down charms have been appreciated by the likes of Rory Gallagher, Talking Heads' David Byrne, Patti Smith and even Jimi Hendrix in his Isley Brothers days.

Now, Fender has brought the Duo-Sonic back with a new modernised version designed for players who want a no-nonsense guitar that's a little out of the ordinary – and we're giving one lucky *The Guitar Magazine* reader the opportunity to win one this month.

The brand new Duo-Sonic uses the same 24-inch scale length that's used on other Fender classics including the Jaguar and Mustang, while also sporting a modern C-shape profile with a 9.5-inch radius. Pickup-wise, you get a pair of clear, punchy Duo-Sonic single-coil pickups in the bridge and neck positions. With vintage-spec design, these pickups work with the alder body and maple neck to enhance the upper harmonics and articulate the midrange so you can cut through in a live setting. New for the Duo-Sonic is a versatile switching arrangement, which includes a three-way toggle plus a push/pull tone knob to select just one coil of the bridge humbucker.

The Duo-Sonic we've got to give away to one lucky reader comes in a brand new Surf Green finish – a classic Fender colour that blends with the pau ferro fingerboard to give a wonderful retro look. Find out more about the new Duo-Sonic at www.fender.com, and to be in with a chance of owning one yourself, simply head to the link below and answer the following question correctly...

theguitarmagazine.com/comps/duosonic

Q Which of these guitars was Fender's first ever 3/4-scale student electric model

A Jaguar **B** Musicmaster **C** Swinger

Terms & Conditions

Closing date: 12.00am GMT 20 December 2017. The editor's decision is final. By entering *The Guitar Magazine* competitions, you are agreeing to receive details of future promotions from Anthem Publishing Limited and related third parties. If you do not want to receive this information, you can opt out. This giveaway is open to over 18s only. For full terms and conditions, please go to **anthem-publishing.com/competition-tcs**

CAVERNS

CHASMAL DELAYS & VAST REVERBS
THE PERFECT END TO ANY PEDAL BOARD

AVAILABLE NOW AT RKFX.COM AND DEALERS WORLDWIDE

KEELEY ELECTRONICS
ENGINEERED AND MADE IN EDMOND, OK, USA
WWW.ROBERTKEELEY.COM

@keeleyelectronics @KeeleyFX @robertkeeley

Vintage COLLECTION

MASTER OF ALL

Duncan Findlay's guitars reflect a varied musical career that has incorporated musicals, orchestras, and advertising jingles. We find out how a jack of all trades has amassed a guitar collection that has helped him succeed in a fickle industry...

Story & Photography **Mark Alexander**

Gibson
ES-335

After a career spanning six decades during which he has covered most mainstream musical styles, Duncan Findlay can safely say he knows a thing or two about the music business. But when it boils down to it, his well-earned reputation as a talented session player is based on his unequivocal ability to adapt.

"The key to working as a pro these days is your versatility," he says carefully. "I can play virtually any style and play it accurately, because I've experienced it."

And to be fair, he has. From sitting in on jam sessions in his parents' Ayrshire pub and playing in a Jimi Hendrix cover band, to blasting through Count Basie tunes at jazz festivals and being a member of a fully fledged pop band that appeared on the Dutch version of *Top Of The Pops*, he's done the lot. He's recorded advertising jingles for double glazing companies and crisp campaigns, and has held down a position in the BBC Scottish Radio Orchestra. He even has a regular slot with a contemporary Scottish dance band cheekily named Ceilidh Minogue.

"That is the key to making a living nowadays," he says. "If you specialise in heavy metal; that's the only area you're going to work in. If that's popular, then great. But if it isn't; you can't make a living. You've got to be able to do everything."

"The neck was nice. The rest of it... well, when you shook it, it rattled like a pair of maracas!"

These days, the 66-year-old is happily based in Tilicoutry, near Stirling, playing three to four gigs a week or deputising in touring musicals. "If the guitarist wants time off, I am happy to step in for a couple of weeks. I've been doing it a long time."

His last 'dep' was in the musical *Grease*. "I enjoyed the first week because it was a challenge. By the second week, I was bored because I had cracked it. The thought of playing the same show for a year would drive me completely up the wall. It gets boring." >

Opposite **Duncan bought this Larry Carlton ES-335 without playing it, but had to have some radical work done on the neck profile before he was happy**

Above **Duncan's Gibson Johnny Smith model has had minimal modifications and only comes out on special occasions**

Above **Duncan bought his Gibson Johnny Smith guitar in 1983. The model fuses a body based on Smith's D'Angelico New Yorker Special with the neck and headstock ornamentation of a Gibson Super 400**

Tools Of The Job

What doesn't bore Findlay are his guitars, which include an array of Gibsons, Fenders and the occasional oddity. He says he finds paradise when he has all his instruments in one studio so he can select the best tonal options for his recording needs. Unfortunately the gang doesn't get together all that often, so today's gathering in his local gastro pub is a rendezvous to savour.

The first guitar to be pulled out of its case is Findlay's trusted SG Custom, which he purchased for a £100 over 30 years ago. Notable for the EMG pickups that weren't even available in the UK at the time, this dark menace has become Findlay's number one, although it wasn't always so cherished.

"It is a great guitar," he says. "It's been my go-to guitar since about 1980 when I bought it as a wreck. It had holes and gouges out of it. I took it off the wall in the shop and looked at the neck, played it and it was nice. The rest of it... well, when you shook it, it rattled like a pair of maracas!"

He bought the guitar for a quarter of its retail price and set about breathing life back into it. He retrofitted a TP6 tailpiece which added fine tuners, and sourced new pickups. "I'd bought the latest Toto record and read that Steve Lukather was using EMGs. They weren't available in the UK, so I wrote to Steve care-of the label in the hope of getting some information. To my delight, he gave me EMG's contact details telling me to mention his name as I might get a discount! I did and I had some of the first EMG pickups in the UK."

"Steve Lukather gave me EMG's contact details and I got some of the first EMG pickups in the UK"

Findlay took his SG from the bargain bucket to the stage of the BBC Scottish Radio Orchestra. "It can do absolutely everything from jazz to funk to country to metal. It can do everything across the board because each of the pickups has got a completely different set of characteristics. Each one has a unique output and

Photo: **Pat Graham**

ARTIST:
SLAVES

OFFSET

DUO-SONIC™ /MUSTANG®

Fender®

©2017 Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. FENDER.COM

Above **Duncan bought his 1952 reissue Tele in 1983, while the Fiesta Red Strat is his homage to Hank**

frequency, so the values of the tone and volume pots are all different. I would never get rid of it. It isn't worth an awful lot because it has been modified so much, but it is my guitar and it suits me."

His black SG wasn't his first flat-topped double-cutaway. That honour went to a 1973 SG he first saw on the wall of Bernie Webb's home studio in the East End of London. "I noticed he had an SG Custom hanging on the wall," Findlay recalls. "I asked if I could play it and fell in love with it instantly. I asked if he might sell it to me. I was a Hendrix fan, so I had a white Fender Strat with a maple neck, which looked great but was an awful guitar. It broke strings and went out of tune, but Bernie was after it. He offered me a deal. My Strat plus £100 and I could have the SG. I borrowed £100 from my dad and bought it!"

Now, with two SGs to his name, Findlay has a host of tonal options at his fingertips. "This one has the original humbuckers, so it is tonally different to the active EMGs. It has an older sound. It's nice to have the two of them."

As with his black SG, Findlay introduced a TP6 tailpiece and Grover Imperial machine heads. He also added a sunburst finish and swapped the original controls for hatbox knobs, also known as Gibson speed knobs, which he finds easier to read and handle.

"It isn't worth an awful lot because it has been modified so much, but it is my guitar and it suits me"

Personal Touch

There is a clear pattern of personalisation in Findlay's guitars, most notably in the tailpiece and speed knobs he adds. It turns out his latest acquisition is no different. The Larry Carlton Gibson ES-335 closely matches the three-time Grammy-winner's prized semi-hollowbody with its 'Carlton Burst' finish, '57 Classic humbuckers and custom neck profile. Unfortunately, Findlay bought his before test driving Mr 335's signature model.

www.eastmanguitars.com

Above **Duncan's most prized guitars – his two Gibson SGs, and the remarkable Alistair Watt guitar-sitar hybrid, which has 13 sympathetic strings hidden in a routed cavity, and a neck profile that's identical to his black SG**

"I broke my golden rule when I bought this guitar," he says. "I bought it from the US without having played one. I had been a Larry Carlton fan for many years and saw the advert, believed the hype and had to have one. There weren't any around to try, so I just paid for it to be sent over. When it arrived, I hated it. The neck was like a baseball bat. I didn't like and didn't play it."

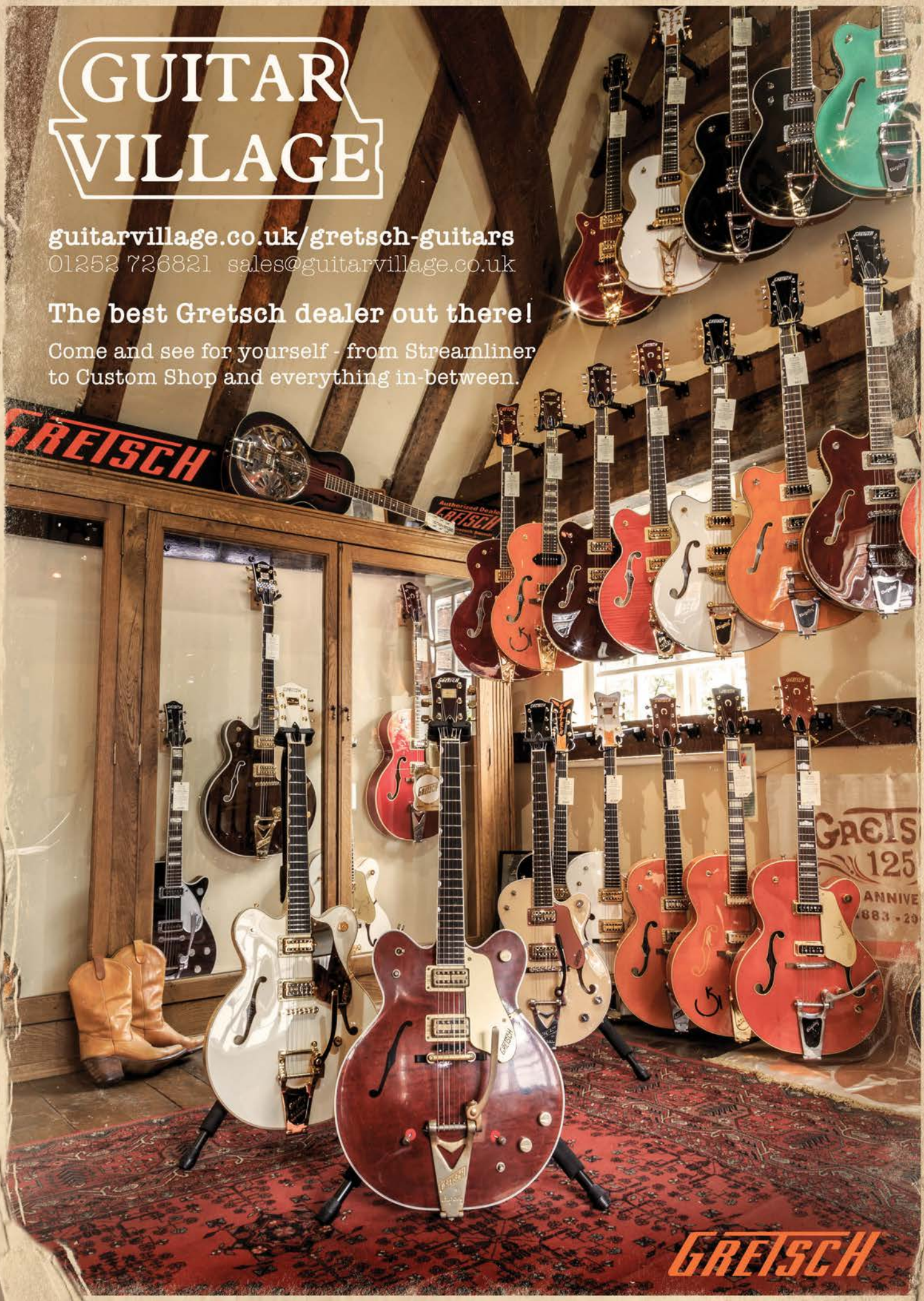
The guitar lay in its case unused and unloved. With pangs of guilt pulsing through Findlay's wallet, he eventually brought the 335 to Jimmy Egypt's repair shop in Glasgow where the guitar received a "shave" using Findlay's black SG neck as a template. According to Egypt, the depth of the SG neck at the first fret was "a very slim 18.5mm whereas Mr 335's was decidedly bulkier at 24.5mm. Quite a difference in size and in that all important 'feel'".

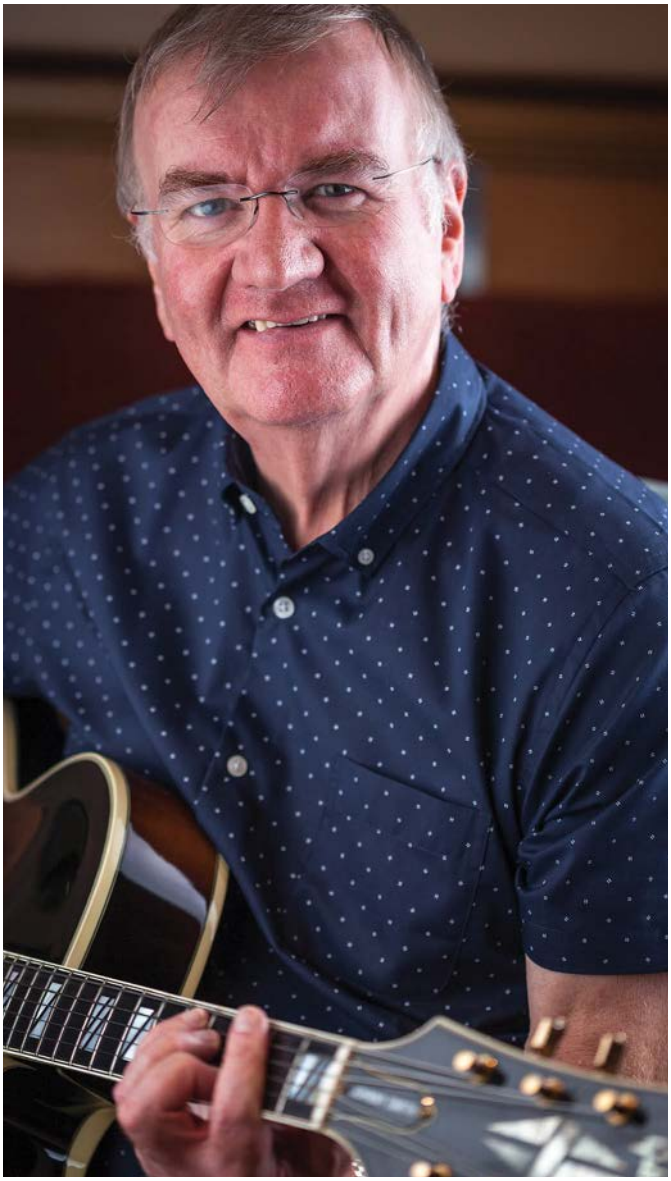
Findlay spent £600 getting the guitar sorted, which meant trimming the neck and filing down the jumbo frets. "Jimmy took a lot off the neck," says Findlay. "He did a great job, but when he was doing it, he said he was really nervous. He said it was like leaning out of a window of a high-rise block of flats backwards because he didn't know exactly where the truss rod was. But it was worth it because the guitar is playable now, whereas before it was just uncomfortable. I feel if the instrument gets in the way, then the music suffers."

"My other SG has the original humbuckers, so it has an older sound. It's nice to have the two of them"

As modifications go, dragging a hefty file down the back of a Gibson Memphis neck is certainly a brave move. But not all of Findlay's guitars have been modified to such an extent. Indeed there is one that has received relatively few adjustments. In fact, his eye-catching Gibson Johnny Smith model is almost original.

"There is a strange aspect to it," he says. "It actually has the neck and headstock of a Super 400, which is why it has such a huge headstock because originally it


GUITAR
VILLAGE
guitarvillage.co.uk/gretsch-guitars
01252 726821 sales@guitarvillage.co.uk
The best Gretsch dealer out there!
Come and see for yourself - from Streamliner
to Custom Shop and everything in-between.
GRETSCH
GRETSCH



Above left **Duncan bought the Johnny Smith to pay homage to his dad's love of archtop Gibsons**

Above right **Duncan's Jose Ramirez a1 is perhaps the most valuable guitar he owns, even if it looks very humble and unassuming**

would have had to balance out the Super 400's body, which is substantially bigger."

He continues: "It's a bit of homage to my father who loved archtop Gibsons and hated all-solid guitars, which he called planks. It was a generational thing. I've always wanted a proper archtop."

Bought in 1983, the archtop only comes out for special occasions, which is entirely understandable considering its current value is around the £7,000 mark. Perhaps as a result, the only adjustments he has made are fixing a bracket to the floating scratchplate and replacing the original mini-jack ouput with a conventional equivalent. Some guitars aren't meant to be messed with.

"When Fender launched the 1952 reissues in 1982, I thought; I've got to have one of these"

Two Of A Kind

The early 1980s were a golden era for Findlay. Averaging six three-hour sessions, eight jingles and four TV shows a week, he was "working like hell". While there might not have been enough hours in the day, the upshot of making hay while the sun shone was having the funds to invest in a blossoming guitar collection.

"One of my heroes was Roy Buchanan," says Findlay reminiscing. "He played a butterscotch Tele, so when Fender launched the 1952 reissues in 1982, I thought; I've got to have one of these."

As we know, Findlay has a golden rule about buying guitars, which he occasionally flouts. The first time he did this was when he purchased an untested 1952 Telecaster reissue. "I didn't like it," he says, "so I got Alastair Watt to re-profile the neck for me, and now it's perfect."

He uses the Tele for blues and country. The 1957 reissue Stratocaster, bought during that same golden era, is more of an all-rounder. Used on a number of musicals, including Hairspray and Big Girls Don't Cry, his reasoning for purchasing it is reassuringly familiar. "I saw the advert and thought; I'm having that."

JOIN THE DOTS

The most expensive guitar in Findlay's collection may be one of the most humble looking – his Jose Ramirez a1. But even this soulful instrument has received a tweak.

"I had always wanted a Ramirez and eventually bought one," he says. "It's wasted on me as I am not a classical player and it has a very wide fingerboard, so it's quite a handful to play. The problem was, as it is a proper classical guitar, it had no position markers on the side of the neck so I kept losing my position and playing the wrong notes. Acting on a tip from Tommy Tedesco, I had Alistair Watt inlay small position markers on the side of the fingerboard. Problem solved! The guitar has a beautiful tone and has appeared as the 'romantic lead' in many a production and recording."

The Fiesta Red Strat with a maple neck screams twang, square glasses and the famed cross-over step. Few guitarists, after all, have sparked such guitar lust as Hank Marvin. "As a boy I really wanted one because of Hank, but my dad wrote it off as a plank of wood."

The red Strat was a childhood dream realised, but it was also a chance to banish the demons of Findlay's first Fender. "When it played, my white Strat sounded good. It was just such a pig with strings."

Although he bought the red Strat new, Findlay upgraded the bridge with Graph Tech saddles. "The nightmare scenario when you're playing in a musical is breaking a string, because the show can't stop. Jimmy Egypt installed these very smooth Graph Tech saddles which makes the chances of breaking a string unlikely. This one has only broken a string once."

Star Guitar

As a conscientious and sought-after session player, Findlay has amassed a remarkable body of work that reflects his eclectic approach to music. It has helped him forge an unbroken career that has taken him from the orchestra pit to the stage and into the studio.

This approach requires him to adapt to briefs and have the guitars to do them justice. This policy reached a crescendo during the early 1980s when Findlay set about amassing a collection of instruments that could handle any job. As well as buying Gibsons and Fenders, he also acquired an electric mandolin, a bouzouki, a charango and a resonator uke, but his custom-designed guitar/sitar hybrid which he co-created with Alistair Watt perhaps embodies his adaptive approach more than any other guitar in his collection. "This is the star guitar for many reasons," he says. "It is a complete one off."

He continues: "The design is quite interesting. The neck is an exact copy of my black SG. It feels exactly the same, and every person who plays it, loves it. Alistair made a few guitars, but he never made anything like this again."

It is a curious thing. The elongated bridge, which is made out of ebony from a church altar, pinches the strings and creates a sitar buzz. There is a soundboard around the back of the guitar where 13 sympathetic strings are hidden in a routed cavity. There is preamp to offer a top-end boost and the pickups were created by Bill Lawrence and are noted for their brightness. Run of the mill it is not!

"It took years to build," he says. "There is only one on the planet. I feel like a custodian looking after it for future generations! It is unique. It is the only one on the planet and is a superb testament to a much missed friend and luthier Alistair Watt."

Our thanks to the Juniper Restaurant in Tillicoutry (www.juniperbarandrestaurant.co.uk) for letting us shoot at their location, and for Forth Music in Kirkcaldy (www.forthmusic.co.uk) for their technical assistance.

The Guitar Magazine
SHOW US YOUR COLLECTION

Want to see your guitars, amps or effects featured in the pages of *The Guitar Magazine*? Email the details and a few taster pics to **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com** to be considered for a future issue

DAVE HUNTER
Dave Hunter is a writer and musician who has worked in the US and the UK. A former editor of this title, he is the author of numerous books including *The Guitar Amp Handbook*, *Guitar Effects Pedals*, *Amped* and *The Fender Telecaster*

Letters from *America*

MARK KANE KANEWRECK ROCKET

Mark Kane has carved out a global reputation with his hand-made interpretations of the iconic circuits designed by Ken Fischer and Alexander Dumble. **DAVE HUNTER** gets on track with the Kanewreck...

The term 'boutique' is often bandied about in the guitar-amp world these days, and it covers a broad range of makers. Once upon a time, though, the term for the crème de la crème was 'custom', and the two most notable US makers in that realm were Trainwreck and Dumble. The only way you can own either one these days is by forking over a mountain of cash – if you can even find one. The dearth of availability of these two most exalted examples of tube tone has inspired several small makers to fill the void, and one of the most respected is Florida's Mark Kane.

Over the past 15 years, Kane has sold more than 600 units based on D-style and T-style circuits, each of which he constructs from the ground up himself, using top-flight components to impeccable build standards.

As these things tend to go in waves, a Trainwreck tide that was swelling about a decade ago seems to have receded, to be replaced by a torrent of Dumble-style fanaticism. Kane says he's lately built more of the latter than the former by a ratio of about 8:1. Personally, I've always had a bit of a soft spot for the ingeniously upgraded Brit-inspired circuits that Ken Fischer put into his Trainwreck amps, particularly for the way they hide an immense and kaleidoscopic tonal palette and seductive touch sensitivity behind an extremely simple interface. We're looking at an amp that's derived from that platform here: a Kanewreck Rocket that was built in 2005. None of the original 'Wreck circuits were 'copies' of anything. Rather, they were Fischer's refined, high-octane interpretations of exalted rock tones delivered by the best Marshall and Vox classics. For all that, the Rocket was perhaps the closest thing to the original JMI-built template, following the gist of the AC30 Top Boost circuit in

KEY FEATURES

Mark Kane Kanewreck Rocket

- **PRICE** £1,996 (excluding shipping and duties)
- **CONTROLS** Volume, treble, bass, cut
- **OUTPUT** 30W
- **TUBES** 3x 12AX7 preamp tubes, 4x EL84 output tubes; GZ34 rectifier
- **FEATURES** Dual speaker outputs with switch for 4, 8 and 16 ohms
- **WEIGHT** 15.4kg/34lbs
- **CONTACT** mkane1650@att.net

Thanks to Mike Michaels and Gary Traversy for loaning us this amp to test

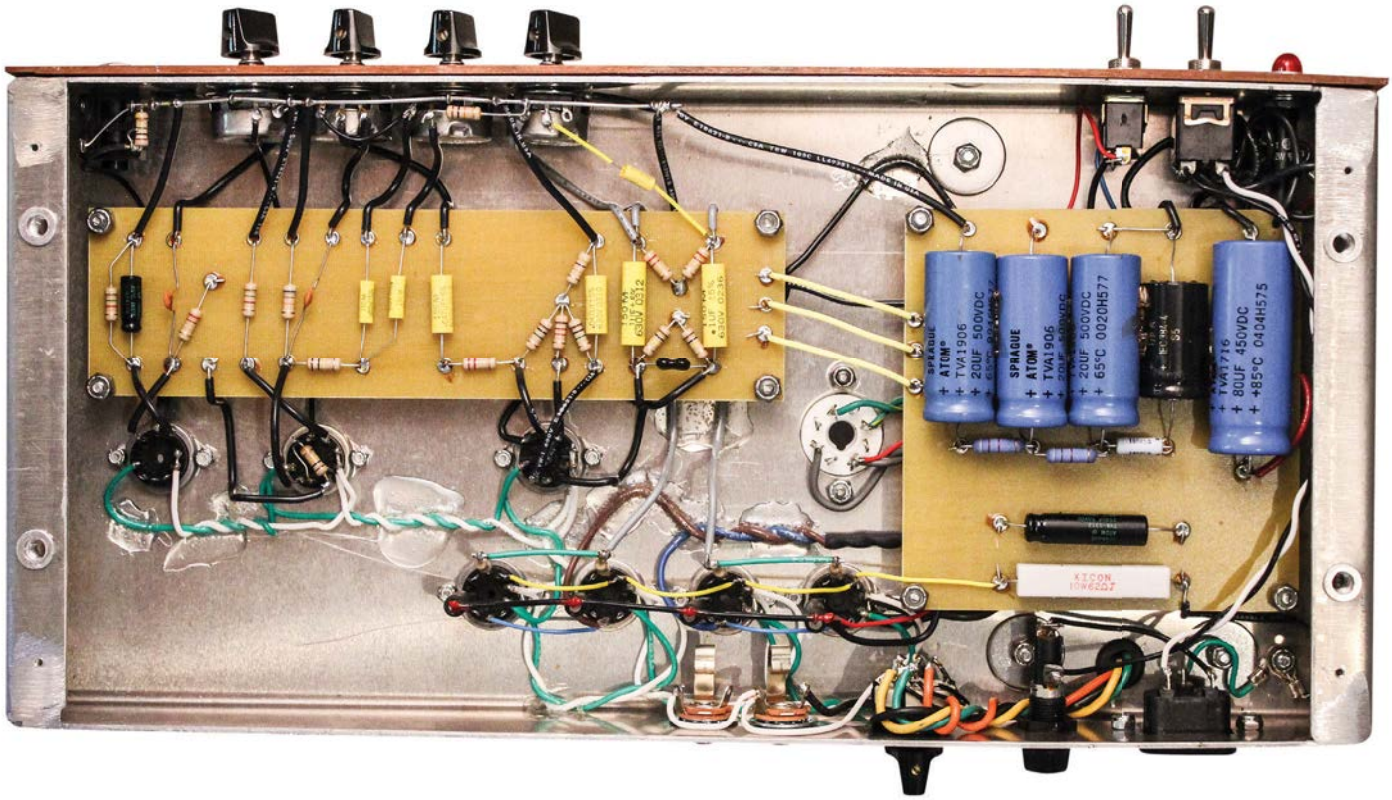
The Kanewreck borrows the classy hardwood-encased looks of the original Trainwreck amps

broad terms, albeit with plenty of Fischer's legendary refinements and that special touch of genius that made original Trainwrecks something entirely other.

Now, the elephant in the room here is that yes, this is a clone of sorts, and our coverage thereof might raise a few eyebrows. I spoke to Ken Fischer several times in the years before his death in December 2006, and among other things he was a resolute proponent of originality and the veracity of his intellectual property. On top of that, official reissue-style Trainwreck amps are currently built, with permission of the Ken Fischer estate, by the enigmatic former associate of Fischer who prefers to go only by his initials, JM. All that being said, Ken himself was able to build fewer than 100 Trainwreck amps in his own lifetime, an effort he was forced to cease long before his death due to severe illness, and by all accounts only between eight and 12 Rockets were among those. Ultimately, there's something to be said for keeping his prodigious gift to guitarists alive one way or the other. However, we're not intending to enter a cloning debate here, or to take a stand: this is merely an assessment of an amp that exists, it's out there in the wide world of guitar, and it's a product that has been delighting many players for many years.

This amp will sound broadly 'AC30-ish', for sure, but it will go way beyond that, too

The amp's simple control panel offers volume, treble, bass, and high-cut, all mounted in a cherry veneer faceplate with no legends (as per Kane's earlier work) to match the solid cherry cab. Inside, as far as the general blueprint goes, this Kane build drives a 12AX7-derived gain stage (using only half of that first tube) into a cathode-follower tone stack provided by a second 12AX7, into a third 12AX7 in the long-tailed-pair phase inverter. From there, the signal hits an output stage comprising four EL84s in cathode-bias, with no negative feedback. But while the topology screams AC30, all kinds of things are done differently, including



The amp's basic design is very AC30-ish, but the layout and components used are destinct, and it all combines to create an amp that can do a lot more than emulate the sound of that Vox classic

component selection – as regards both type and value – and wiring layout, and this all pays through into what the amp achieves in sonics and playing sensitivity. It's a little like telling two car makers – say, Volkswagen and Ferrari – to each build cars with four wheels, a five-speed gearbox, and a two-litre engine, then discovering just how different the results are when you slip behind the wheel. Long story short: this amp will sound broadly 'AC30-ish', for sure, but it will go way beyond that, too.

Having got all that out of the way, it's worth noting, too, that Kane hasn't slavishly followed the interiors of original 'Wrecks for many years. Instead, much like Fischer himself used to do, he approaches each build as a thing unto itself. "By 2005 I was pretty much building them and then voicing them to what the buyer wanted, and what I thought worked best for their preferences," Kane tells us. "I'd stopped sourcing obsolete components and materials, with the exception of output transformers. In short, I grew to be uninterested in making the internals mimic an original. Quality new parts measured to specific values, proper voltages, good lead dress, and the right output transformer is hard to beat when in the hands of a guy that can play."

This particular Kanewreck, dubbed 'Elysa', bears witness to all of the above: the interior reveals an amp that's beautifully and ruggedly put together, with a preponderance of Mallory signal caps, carbon-film resistors, and Sprague filter caps on two hand-punched eyelet boards, all within a sturdy aluminium chassis. All transformers are quality American-made Heyboers, which Kane was moving over to almost exclusively around this time.

Tested with a Les Paul with humbuckers and a Novo Serus S with Strat-style pickups, through a variety of speaker cabs, the Kanewreck gushes old-school, crank-it-up-and-wail appeal that is utterly enticing. None of these Fischer-derived designs were 'high-gain' in the modern sense, and the Rocket was an even a lower-gain creation than the Express and the Liverpool, with one fewer gain stage, but I love it that way. To my ears, such designs are prone to less sizzle and fizz in the highs when they start to break up, and this thing goes from sweet clean chime to delectably scorching-hot chime amid the succulent overdrive when you get it past about noon or one o'clock on the volume, depending on the guitar and pickups. At this point, it oozes what the 'Wreck platform was all about: an al dente note clarity and attack amid thick harmonic saturation, but even more than that, utterly beguiling dynamics that enable the kind of playing-touch control that you feel in very few amps. Added to that, the Kanewreck also has more thump and a more immediate and punchy attack than a vintage AC30 when cranked to the edge of breakup.

I've never owned a Trainwreck. I have played a few over the years, briefly – two Expresses and a Liverpool – but never a Rocket, though I remember those as similar experiences. If memory serves, they might have been a hair more incendiary than this amp, and also a little more wired-to-your-fingertips and hair-trigger than this one (as above, the Rocket has a slightly tamer circuit to begin with) but the nature is here for sure, and in abundance. Did the real 'Wrecks deliver more of that thing? Possibly; but very possibly not. And have you got $30k to $40k to spend on an amp? I thought not. All things considered, this hardwood-encased beauty from Mark Kane delivers a lot of tone and playing feel at a fraction of the price of the original article, and that says a lot, I feel.

HELIX®

AUTHENTIC, FROM HEAD TO TONE

Find out more at: line6.com/helix

LINE 6

© 2017 Line 6, Inc. Line 6 and Helix are trademarks of Line 6, registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Vintage BENCH TEST

WILD WESTMINSTER

For a killer combination of tweed feel and vintage British tone, you'd expect to pay through the nose, right? Not necessarily, as **HUW PRICE** discovers when he encounters this rare Watkins Westminster Mk II...

Above **The Westminster has just three controls – volume, tone and tremolo – plus dual inputs**
Opposite top **The punched metal grille is one of the most distinctive features of the Mk II Westminster**

There aren't many similarities between Fullerton and Chertsey, but there's at least one thing that the amp boffins at Fender and Watkins Electronic Music had in common – once they settled upon a name, they never let it drop. Just as the Silverface Fender Deluxe and the 1940s version had next to nothing in common, the boxy little Watkins Westminster of the late 1950s and the WEM versions from the tail end of the 1970s might as well have been made by a different company.

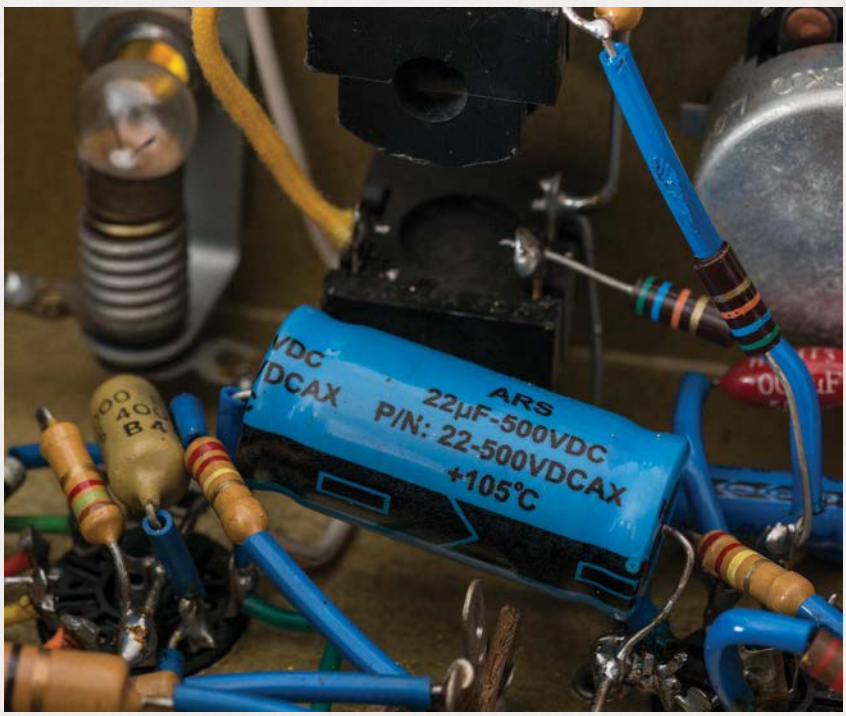
The sheer ugliness of the firm's later amps may partly explain why they are some of the few remaining vintage amp bargains. This Mk II example was manufactured some time between

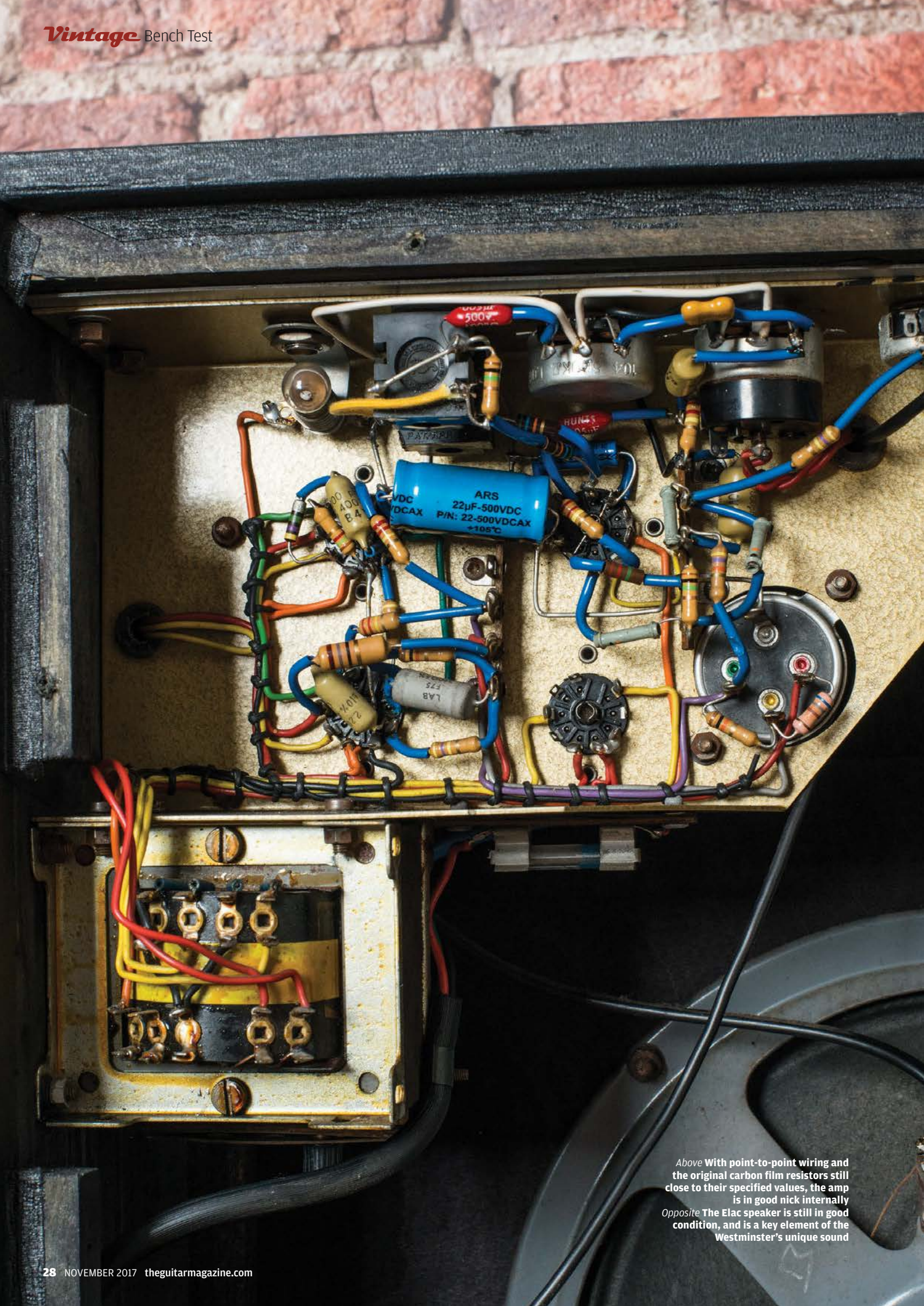
1964 and the late 60s. We dare say opinions will differ, but we think it looks pretty fantastic!

This model will be familiar to regular readers of *The Guitar Magazine*, because we renovated one last year for a Workshop feature. The difference is that the Workshop example had lived a hard life, but this one is in close to mint condition. It cropped up on an auction site recently and cost the new owner the princely sum of £400. Apparently it had been purchased new by the vendor's father and barely used. According to the Vintage Hofner website, he would have paid around 23 guineas at the time.

The main differences between this Westminster and the one we restored are the intact speaker grille, factory fitted handle and the presence of the Elac 10-inch alnico speaker. The first two are largely cosmetic, but the Elac speaker will give us a much clearer idea of how Mk II Westminsters might originally have sounded.

As with the previous Mk II Westminster, we're astonished at how little needs doing electronically. The amp is wired point-to-point and the carbon film >





Above **With point-to-point wiring and the original carbon film resistors still close to their specified values, the amp is in good nick internally**
Opposite **The Elac speaker is still in good condition, and is a key element of the Westminster's unique sound**

resistors have stayed closer to their specified values than carbon comps generally do.

Besides replacing the cathode bypass capacitors and a couple of resistors in the power supply, the only change you'd need to make is a reconfiguration of the two inputs from a mixer arrangement with identical levels, to high and low inputs – with lower value grid resistors and the high input being hotter than before.

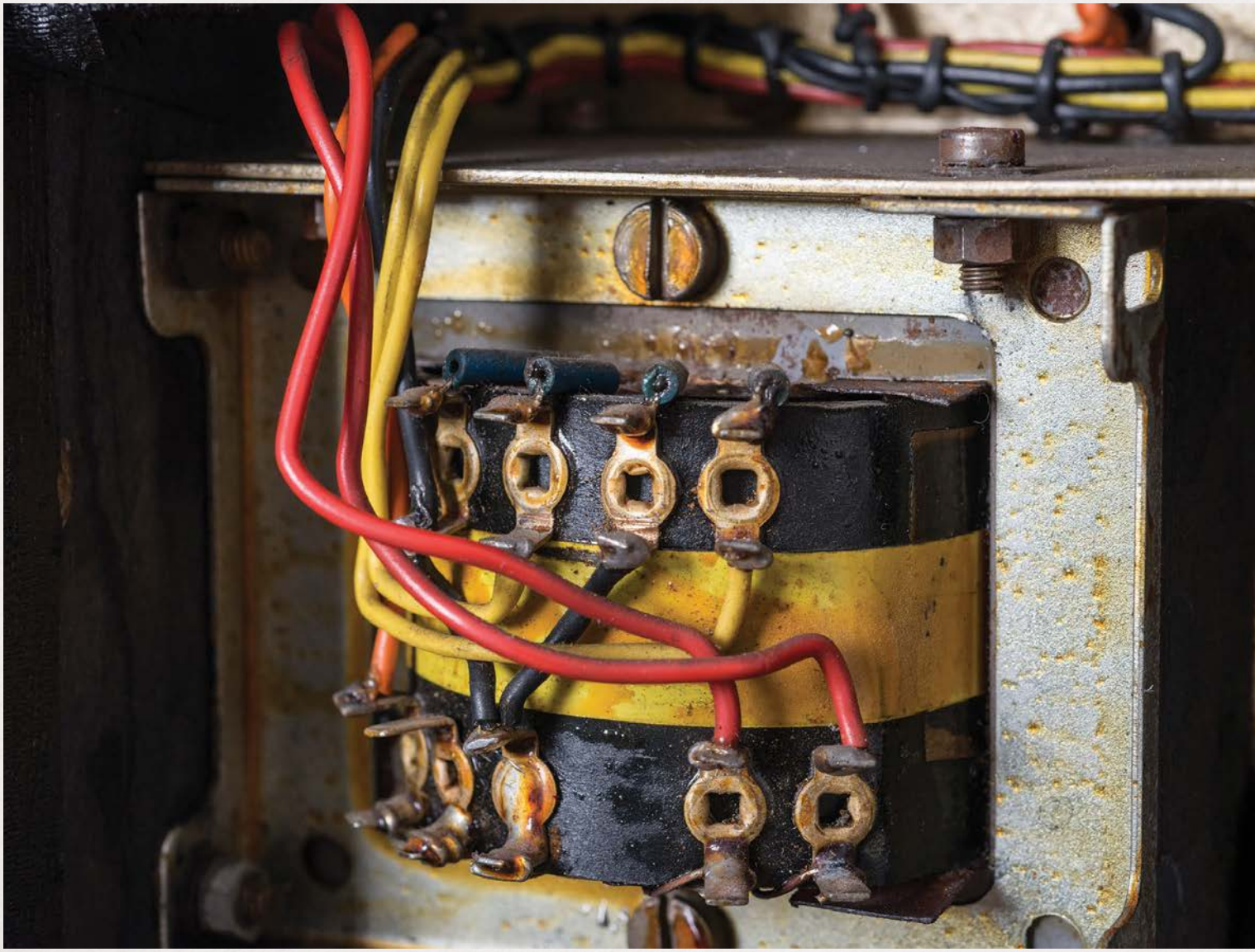
The most unusual feature of the circuit is the use of a pair ECL82 (aka 6BM8, 6PL12) valves. These were most commonly used in televisions and contain a preamp-style triode and a power pentode in a single glass enclosure. Apparently, some people convert Westminsters to dual-EL84 operation, but we can't imagine why anybody would bother because ECL82s are reasonably priced and readily available.

In Use

You can't claim that this has the prettiest sound, but the Mk II Westminster is certainly one of the most thrilling amplifiers we've ever played. If you're a tweed Deluxe devotee who has the occasional hankering for British tone, the Westminster somehow hits a wonderful half-way point while retaining something distinctly its own. No doubt part of this is the way the volume and tone controls interact because, as with a Deluxe, the tone control adds brightness and gain as you turn it up.

The Mk II Westminster is certainly one of the most thrilling amplifiers we've ever played

Similarly, things get brighter as you turn up the volume, so it's all about balancing the two controls to zone in on the sound you want and then using your guitar's controls for variety. In fact you have little choice but to get to grips with them because they're the only controls you have. >



Above **It's not just the playability that's a wild ride – the connection terminals on the transformer are exposed, so don't go reaching around inside with the power on...**

At low volume settings the sound isn't particularly inspiring. It's a decent enough clean tone but really a bit nondescript and two-dimensional. However, if you hold a chord and slowly turn up the volume you'll find a point where there's a sudden lift in the low midrange and you to hear a hint of overdrive and compression. This is where the magic begins.

Continue lifting the volume and you get gentle increases in overdrive and compression until you hit a second sweet spot and the Westminster begins to roar as the boost extends from the low into the upper mids. Up to this point the Elac contributes a Vox-like shimmer and airiness that chimes across the overdrive. We never quite pulled this out of the Westminster we restored, but it was definitely there, and the Elac speaker suits the Westminster amp even better than the ceramic Celestion we used.

Having said that, the Elac's brightness compels us to roll back the tone once the volume control goes beyond a certain point. Not that we're complaining, because taming treble is a lot better than struggling for clarity and this amp and speaker combo cuts through mixes with ease.

Even with Strat pickups, the Westminster is capable of generating ferocious quantities of overdrive

Even with vintage-style Strat pickups, the Westminster is capable of generating ferocious quantities of overdrive – and this isn't the refined and smooth distortion of a typical EL84-equipped modern boutique amp. Instead it's the hooligan thrill of Slade meets *20th Century Boy* in a sonic alchemy of cone compression and crunchy thermionic overload.

You would need to look elsewhere for defined lows and crisp chugs – especially with humbuckers – and on balance we'd say the Westminster sounds best with single coils. In fact it's one of the finest matches we've ever found for a Tele, whether you want to emulate Roy Buchanan or Steve Marriott in The Faces. For classic British blues-rock at

strobeCliPHD™

AMAZING THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Taking over 50 Sweetened™ tunings and the same 0.1 cent accuracy and pin-point precise real-strobe tuning technology known from our state-of-the-art pedal and rack tuners, the new **StroboClip HD™** crams tuning perfection into a small and sleek-looking enclosure that'll fit straight on your instrument, all at a fraction of the cost!

peterson
STROBE TUNERS
The Sound of Precision.

Torpedo *Captor*

The Compact Loadbox and Amp D.I.

100W LOADBOX
ATTENUATOR
SPEAKER-SIM
DI

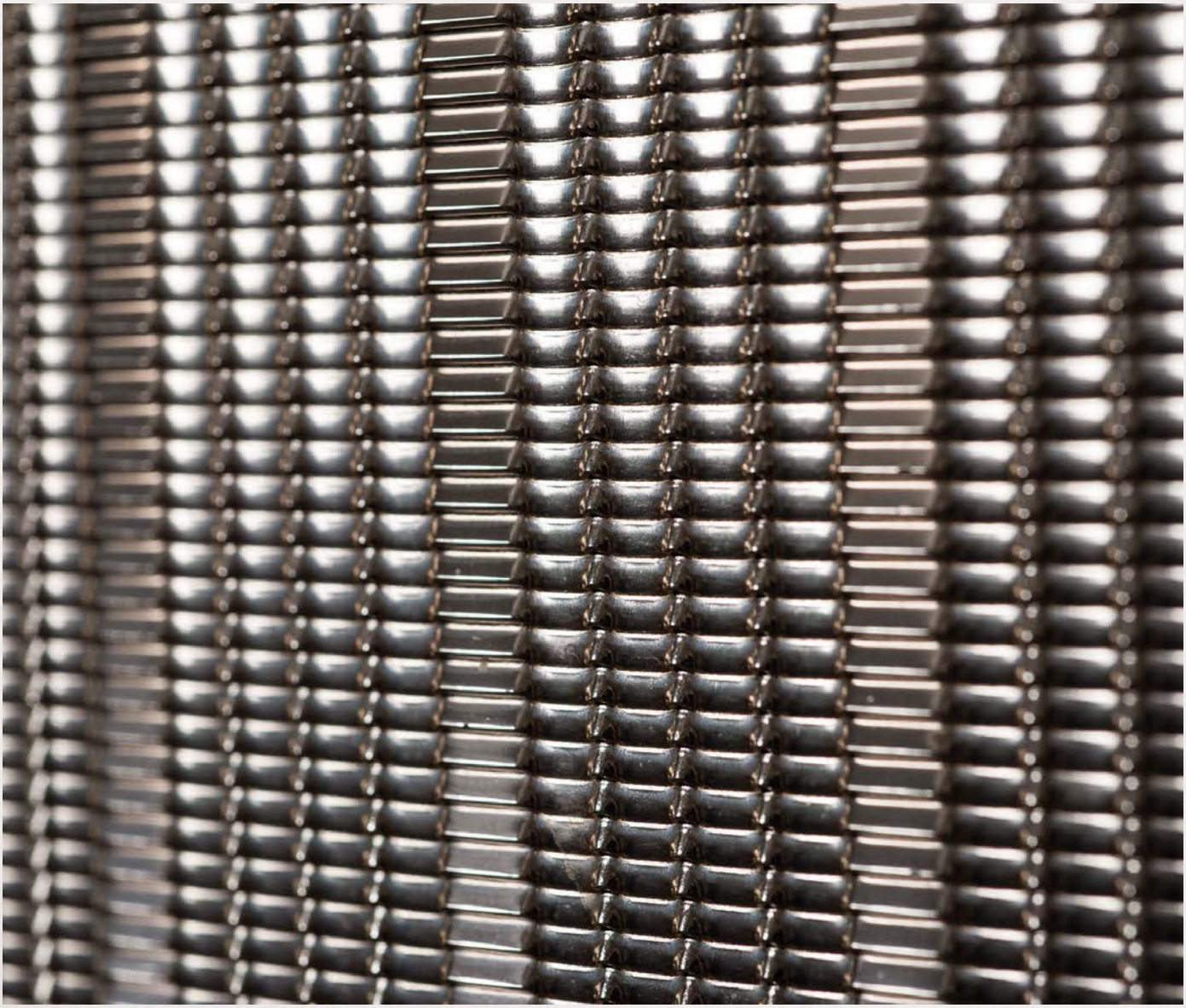
The **Torpedo Captor** is an easy to use reactive Loadbox, perfect for safely unleashing your favourite tube amplifier in a variety of modern applications and venues. Use the amp you love, without the noise and hassle - but still retain the feel!

Designed to be placed between your amp head/combo and speaker cab or even without a speaker entirely, Captor can act as a power attenuator/cabinet simulator all packed in a DI sized enclosure that features a complete set of connections and comes with the WOS II plug-in for your DAW.

www.two-notes.com

Two notes
AUDIO ENGINEERING

Audio Distribution Group | FILLING DISTRIBUTION
UK Distribution by the Audio Distribution Group / Filling Distribution alliance - **Building Brands Together**
sales@audiodistributiongroup.com



KEY FEATURES

1960s Watkins Westminster Mk II

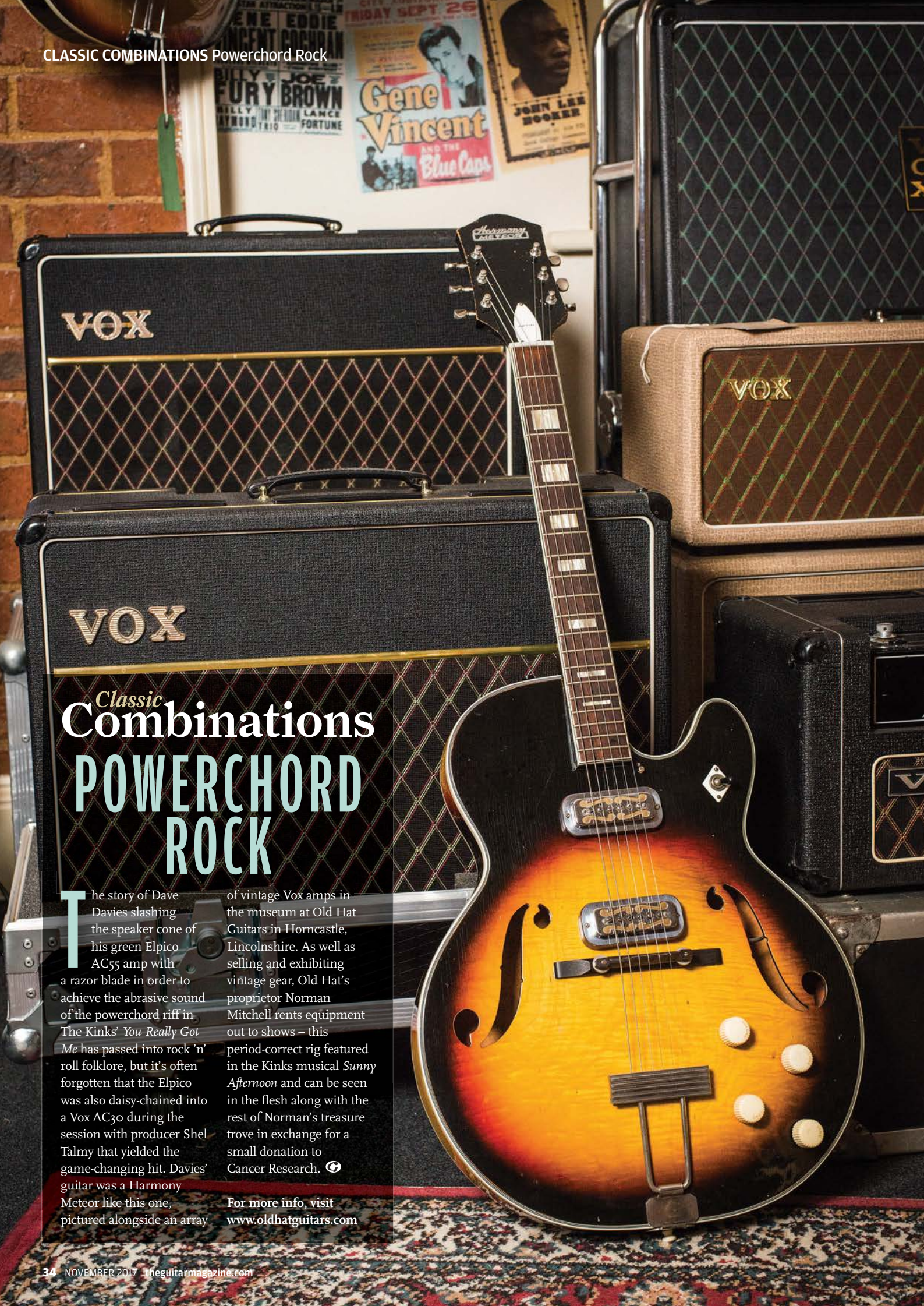
- **DESCRIPTION** All-valve combo amplifier. Made in the UK
- **BUILD** Single-channel, point-to-point wiring, built in tremolo, valve rectified
- **POWER RATING** 10W
- **VALVES** 1x ESS83, 2x ECL82, 1x EZ80
- **CONTROL PANEL** 2x input jacks, volume control/power switch, tone, speed
- **SPEAKER** 1x Elac 10" alnico 4-ohm
- **DIMENSIONS** 350 x 310 x 155mm
- **WEIGHT** 8.9kg/19.62lbs

acceptable volume levels without needing stompbox assistance for sustain, the Westminster MkII is undoubtedly 'it'.

Although there's no tremolo depth/intensity control it hardly seems to matter. It's a fairly strong trem effect with just the right amount of depth, but more importantly an extremely playable rise and fall characteristic that seems to slot straight into a groovy triplet feel regardless of the speed setting. When the trem is activated there is a very subtle loss of treble and the effect does lose strength as volume approaches maximum.

To close, let's return to the tweed Deluxe comparison. It goes beyond the interaction of the controls and it's not really a sonic resemblance at all. The real reason for mentioning this is the way both the tweed Deluxe and the Westminster Mk II can make a player feel totally connected to a guitar and amp – in short, it's tweed feel with Brit tone. We've never quite felt that from an 18-watt or a low-wattage Vox and if that's the sort of thing that appeals to you, you'll have to get in line as we want one!

Art & Lutherie
MADE IN CANADA
EST. 1995
artandlutherieguitars.com



Classic
Combinations
POWERCHORD ROCK

The story of Dave Davies slashing the speaker cone of his green Elpico AC55 amp with a razor blade in order to achieve the abrasive sound of the powerchord riff in The Kinks' *You Really Got Me* has passed into rock 'n' roll folklore, but it's often forgotten that the Elpico was also daisy-chained into a Vox AC30 during the session with producer Shel Talmy that yielded the game-changing hit. Davies' guitar was a Harmony Meteor like this one, pictured alongside an array of vintage Vox amps in the museum at Old Hat Guitars in Horncastle, Lincolnshire. As well as selling and exhibiting vintage gear, Old Hat's proprietor Norman Mitchell rents equipment out to shows – this period-correct rig featured in the Kinks musical *Sunny Afternoon* and can be seen in the flesh along with the rest of Norman's treasure trove in exchange for a small donation to Cancer Research.

For more info, visit www.oldhatguitars.com

ORANGE™

FUR COAT FUZZ

FUZZ NEVER GOES OUT OF FASHION

SINGLE ENDED OCTAVE FUZZ

orangeamps.com

New music

We round up and rate a selection of this month's guitar-driven releases and reissues

JD McPherson
UNDIVIDED HEART & SOUL

ON The Guitar Magazine OFFICE STEREO

JD McPherson first came to our attention in 2012 when his 2010 indie-label debut album, *Signs & Signifiers,* was given a wider release by American roots label Rounder Records. Breakthrough single, *North Side Gal,* was a two-and-a-half minute bolt of R&B lightning as remarkable for McPherson's devastating Little Richard-influenced vocal performance and taut, sinewy guitar as it was for its none-more-authentic Sun Records production courtesy of upright-bass dynamo Jimmy Sutton.

However, McPherson – a former art and technology teacher from rural Oklahoma – was never content to be a one-dimensional rockabilly revivalist. Though it was recorded during evening sessions at Nashville's hallowed RCA Studio B (once the tourists had left for the day), *Undivided Heart & Soul* crackles with the frayed, primitive energy of 60s garage, along with occasional echos of the fuzzy pop eclecticism of McPherson's friend, Dan Auerbach.

While McPherson remains rooted in the golden era of magnetic tape and hot glass, there are plenty of twists and turns here from a man who loves Morrissey, Marr and Bad Brains as much as he does Fats Domino. *Lucky Penny* and *On The Lips* are highlights – the former is a sizzling Black Keys meets Queens Of The Stone Age glam stomp, while the latter has shades of Arcade Fire and The Cure. Conclusive proof that retro guitar music needn't be predictable. **CV**

9/10

TRY IF YOU LIKE: *Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats, The Black Keys*

The White Buffalo

DARKEST DARKS, LIGHTEST LIGHTS

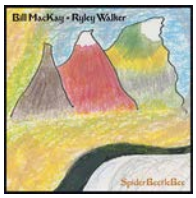
"Things have got to change," sings Jake Smith on *Avalon*, the second track of The White Buffalo's new album, *Darkest Darks, Lightest Lights* – and that's clearly been a subject on his mind when crafting his sixth opus. The general vibe of *Avalon* is a compelling case in point, shedding the limitations of his brooding acoustic singer-songwriter past to mine the Springsteen fault with aplomb – crafting a driving track that in fine Boss tradition, vividly tells the story a character from the wrong side of the tracks. It's a vibe that suits Smith's gravelly baritone to a tee, but also gives him a chance to showcase his electric playing more than ever. The scuzzy slapback-drenched blues of *Robbery* is another example of this, while the Lizzy-esque *The Heart And Soul Of The Night* reveals an unexpected injection of good-time 70s rock 'n' roll. *The Observatory* shows that his prowess as an acoustic player is undimmed, but these returns to balladry mainly serve to remind us that he's better served focussing on this new, more bombastic direction. **GJ**

7/10

TRY IF YOU LIKE *Bruce Springsteen, Chuck Ragan*

Bill MacKay & Ryley Walker

SPIDERBEETLEBEE



This is the second collection of instrumental acoustic music to spring from the friendship of like-minded Chigagoan guitar players Ryley Walker and Bill MacKay, and over these eight tracks, the pair once again give themselves free rein to explore a wide diet of folk and traditional styles – sometimes faithfully, sometimes a great deal less so. There's something joyful about a pair of young, experimental artists delving into myriad styles – from folk and blues to raga, Latin and baroque – with such abandon, but with a keen eye for considered melody and song structure at the heart of everything. The standout is *I Heard Them Singing*, where Walker's rolling fingerpicked chords give a psychedelic sheen to the fiery lead lines of MacKay's five-string requinto. Fans of Walker's breakout 2015 solo record, *Primrose Green*, will be well versed in his talents as an acoustic player, and MacKay is an ideal foil, the pair's intricately intertwining acoustics driving each track on a journey through many styles and moods. **GJ**

7/10

TRY IF YOU LIKE *Ryley Walker, Bert Jansch*

My Sad Captains

SUN BRIDGE

My Sad Captains want to inject your drizzly autumn days with a shot of dreamy, breezy guitar-pop, and *Sun Bridge* is the instrument they've crafted to administer it. Since their last album, 2014's *Best Of Times*, the line-up has been in flux, with drummer Jim Wallis and guitarist Nick Goss departing before the album's sessions, and bassist Dan Davis moving on shortly after completion. But with well-travelled guitarist Leon Dufficy joining singer/guitarist Ed Wallis for album four, there's a fresh injection of ideas that allows the band to push on regardless. *Everything At The End Of Everything*'s simple, Fendery clean melody line adds a languid vibe that counterpoints the driving drums and shimmering synths, while *Don't Pull Yourself Apart* is a REM-vibed slice of catchy guitar-pop that shimmers with delicate, ethereal guitar interplay. An album that invites you to turn off the lights, get comfortable and immerse yourself in its dreamy, delicate soundscapes. **JG**

8/10

TRY IF YOU LIKE *Camera Obscura, The Field Mice*

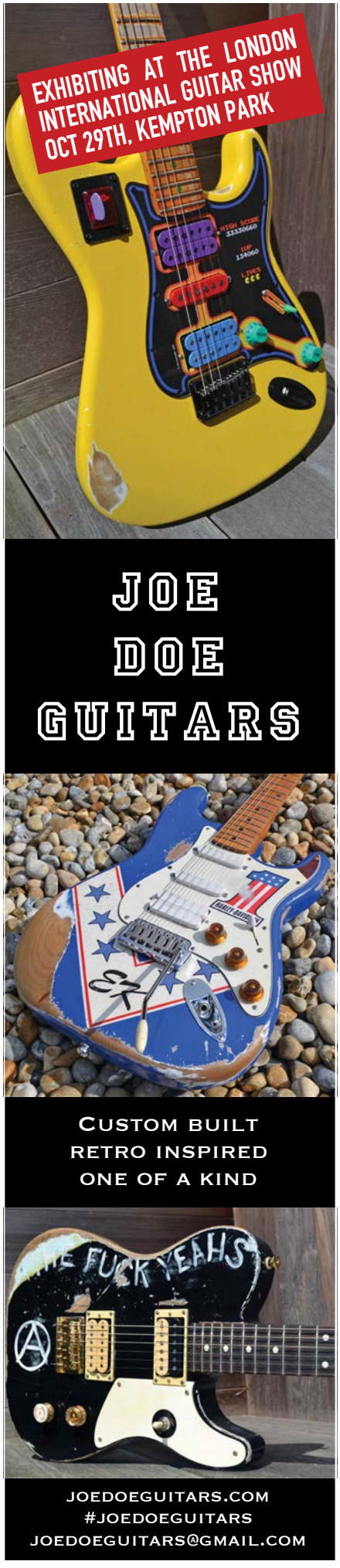
Godsticks

FACED WITH RAGE

Godsticks have come a long way since their 2010 debut, evolving from their original prog leanings into a much heavier beast. *Faced With Rage* is underpinned by tightly knit thunderous rhythms, blended expertly with the virtuoso lead work and distinctive vocal style of frontman, Darran Charles. During its 56-minute runtime, the Welsh four-piece cram in a multitude of stylistic flourishes. There are lashings of Mastodon, Cleft and Gojira, to name a few, but the album really shines when proceedings relax a little, particularly on standout track, *We Are Leaving*. If we're nit-picking, we'd have liked to see Charles stretch himself vocally a little more – he's got the range of a Vedder-Cornell hybrid and it would have been great to see him cut loose and show us what his pipes are capable of. It's no deal-breaker, however, and with the instrumentation never less than faultless, this feels like a record on which Godsticks have properly nailed their colours to the mast. **CM**

8/10

TRY IF YOU LIKE *Mastodon, The Safety Fire*



SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Jamie Lawson

Ed Sheeran-approved guitarist shares the artists that inspired him to chart-topping success

When one of the biggest artists on the planet plucks you from relative obscurity to support him on a sold-out stadium tour, you must be doing something right. That's what flame-haired loop-merchant Ed Sheeran did to 41-year-old English singer-songwriter Jamie Lawson in 2014, and he doubled down by making the Devon native the first signing to his Gingerbread Man record label a year later. Lawson's self-titled debut didn't disappoint, topping the UK album charts and giving him a top 10 hit in the shape of *Wasn't Expecting That*. Lawson's second album on Gingerbread Man, titled *Happy Accidents*, is available now. To find out more, visit jamielawsonmusic.com.

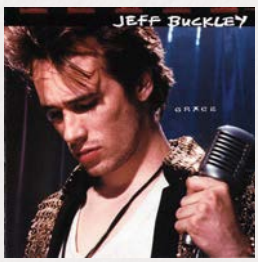
REM
AUTOMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE

"This is REM at their most stripped back, most vulnerable, most fragile, most reflective. Like a lot of people I discovered REM on *Out Of Time*, but it's this I've held on to and gone back to the most. The depth of it, the murkiness of the guitars all swamped up in feedback and controlled noise, with those plaintive acoustics over the top. There's still, 25 years later, always something to find."

Mark Eitzel
60 WATT SILVER LINING

"This record made me want to be a singer, made me realise that actually if you have things constantly stirring around inside of you and you can sing, you should probably spend your life singing those things out. Mark Eitzel taught me how to do it. I've seen him live a fair few times, he's constantly re-tuning to these weird combinations that then make these incredibly tender, beautiful sounds."

Jeff Buckley
GRACE

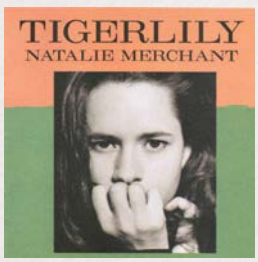


"Possibly the best album ever made. Some people are great singers and good guitar players, some great guitar players and good singers, Jeff Buckley was incredible at both. He seemed to be able to do anything, reach any note, play any riff, and then on top of that write these beautiful dense, intricate, heavy, gentle, gothic, lasting songs. Such a loss, a consistent hole in the heart."

The Smiths
THE QUEEN IS DEAD

"I remember being in the playground singing 'Good times for a change, see the life I've had, make a good man bad.' I was eight. It almost seems like The Smiths have always been there. *The Queen Is Dead* is my favourite: Johnny Marr's guitar, so jubilantly happy, Morrissey's lyrics, so sad and humorous at the same time. Who else would write *Some Girls Are Bigger Than Others* or *Vicar In A Tutu*?! Genius."

Natalie Merchant
TIGERLILLY



"This album got me through the passing of my father. It came out a couple of weeks after he died and I listened to it non-stop for six months. This was her first record after leaving 10,000 Maniacs and suddenly there was space and time, more room to let those kind words come through and then soar into big electric guitars to carry the emotion through. It's a beautiful record and I will be ever grateful for it."

Patty Griffin
IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

"Sometimes all you need is a bit of simplicity in your music. A strummed acoustic guitar and some brilliant stories to tell with it. Patty Griffin does that thing better than most everyone else. This record gets straight to the point, direct to the heart. There's nothing complicated about it – it's just the truth. It's a great lesson in letting the song do the work."

Radiohead
OK COMPUTER

"The leap from *The Bends* to *OK Computer* was huge. Alien guitar music with weird choirs and lyrics of alienation, and confusion. I was hooked. The epic-ness of it all, the ambition, it seems no one had really shown that for a while. Jonny Greenwood is such a brilliantly inventive guitar player; the strange timings of guitar parts on *Let Down* is so cool and off-kilter. I played this record to death."

Ron Sexsmith
OTHER SONGS

"This is classic singer/songwriter writing, with beautiful lyrics and melodies alongside perfect chord changes. Ron's a brilliant guitar player, finding these gorgeous segues from chorus to verse. Recently, I got to write with him, what an honour to watch him think, to see how his mind finds those chords. We wrote a song called *Sorrow Town*, which is on the deluxe version of my new album."

John Denver
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

"There wasn't much music in my house growing up, until my brothers introduced me to The Smiths and The Housemartins. Until then we had Nana Mouskouri and *Rocky Mountain High*. But it's a brilliant record, honestly! The acoustic guitars are fantastic, the way they're layered and the textures... it really isn't that far removed from what bands like Midlake and Fleet Foxes are doing now."

The Icelandic quartet are making waves with their powerful blues-rock. **JOSH GARDNER** found out what's making them resonate on both sides of the Atlantic...

You might not know Kaleo's name, but you've probably heard their music. From *FIFA* to *Logan* via *Orange Is The New Black*, the Icelandic four-piece have leant their resonator-driven blues to TV shows, video games, adverts and films. And it's not hard to see why – the powerful, gruff vocals of frontman JJ Julius Son would be a big draw on its own, before you add his impressive guitar chops into the mix.

But if you haven't heard many blues bands from Iceland over the years, you're not alone – there's not much of a scene there...

"I would say nonexistent!" chuckles JJ. "The music scene in Iceland is interesting though. People are just experimenting – you see all kinds of artists doing all kinds of things, so that's kind of liberating and fun to be part of. But the blues is something that I've always resonated with."

His blues journey started with his dad, who passed on his love of rock 'n' roll, which led JJ to discover blues, roots music and the guitar.

"I taught myself to play guitar when I was about 12 or 13," JJ recalls "I learned on a nylon-string, and did a lot of fingerpicking, which was a good start. Then I started exploring the instrument, moving into acoustic and electric."

Key to his development as a musician, however, was his introduction to the resonator, and the instrument's unmistakable sound has become the cornerstone of Kaleo's sonic brew, with JJ's howling slides riffs and fingerpicked bluesy runs given extra bite and air thanks to the guitar's unique construction.

"It's a very interesting instrument, both to look at and the sound of it," JJ affirms. "They just have a really distinctive sound that seems to really work for some of my songwriting."

JJ's guitar collection features some 1930s National resonators, but his weapon of choice comes courtesy of British luthier, Pete Turner.

"I feel lucky that I stumbled upon Pete Turner's guitar in London," JJ explains. "They didn't have any vintage resonators in the studio, but they had this Pete Turner Marrakech – and I fell in love! I used it on the record and I've been playing it ever since! They're beautiful instruments, and they're quality – I want to feel comfortable using on stage what I use in the studio."

Turner has recently completed a unique resonator for JJ, designed to reflect its owner's heritage, most notably a striking gold coverplate, which has the 1,000-year-old Icelandic runic alphabet engraved into it, and serves to give the instrument its name, 'Runes'.

But while the personal touches are great, the most exciting thing about Runes for JJ is that his latest guitar adds a different sound for him to play with. "That's the fun thing, they're totally different," JJ enthuses. "The Runes one has more body and is much richer – I don't really like two guitars to sound the same."

With a broad palette of sounds and a knack for crafting foot-stomping crowd-pleasers and confessional ballads alike, Kaleo are certainly putting Icelandic blues on the map.

Kaleo play a one-off gig at the Roundhouse in London on 1 November. Their new album, *A/B*, is out now on Elektra

Fretbuzz

Your letters. This month: sweetening up your Strats, the good gear/good player conundrum, and going over the air...

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Shields up!

I've owned many Strats over the years, and noise has been a common problem in that time – as a result I've shielded a number of guitars over the years, but I mainly used kitchen foil to do it. With that in mind, I was interested to read in last issue's Strat Tone cover feature Huw Price's suggestion of fitting a proper aluminium shield, which might also offer the bonus of improving the guitar's tone. Suitably inspired, I bought a shield online for under a tenner, and while I was at it I painted the bare cavities of my Mexican 2002 Strat with conductive shielding paint, too.

It worked a treat! Not only did it make for a quieter guitar, it did indeed result in an overall improvement to the tone, with it sounding noticeably sweeter. I don't know if I've now got Huw's 'paramagnetism' (ooer, missus!), but it's been a win-win. Please do keep Huw busy at the DIY bench – his articles are the first ones I turn to when your super, new-style mag lands on the doormat!
Paul Harrington, *via email*

***GM* It's always really gratifying for us and for Huw when we hear about readers taking the tips and DIY advice that we publish and put it in to practice, Paul – we're glad it's worked out so well for you! Never fear, we've got Huw beavering away on a bunch of interesting and useful projects as we speak – the build your own Martin guide on p112 isn't a bad place to start! Enjoy keeping your sweet-sounding Strat in tune with a Peterson StroboClip HD tuner!**

WRITTEN A LETTER OF THE MONTH?

Then you win a Peterson StroboClip HD clip-on tuner worth £51.99! The SC-HD has the same tenth-of-a-cent accuracy as all Peterson Strobe Tuners, but in clip-on form, with a bright HD screen, over 50 Sweetened tunings and alternate temperaments for other stringed instruments.* For more, visit **petersontuners.com**

**LOTM prize is subject to availability and may change*

HAVE YOUR SAY! Write to us via snail mail, *The Guitar Magazine, Anthem Publishing, Suite 6 Piccadilly House, London Road, Bath BA1 6PL* or email **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com.** Alternatively, get in touch via social media on Facebook or Twitter.

facebook.com/theguitarmagazine **@guitarmagazine**

youtube.com/theguitarmagazine **@theguitarmagazine**

All In The Hands

Dear *The Guitar Mag*, like most players, I soak up reviews of new gear with avid interest. There is always that mystical item out there that might just help us to achieve the ultimate sound. However, the logical side of my brain asks me whether a mediocre plumber would become an excellent one if only he or she were to obtain that super deluxe spanner. Nonsense of course, and so it is with musicians.

I remember in the 60s going into the old Selmer store in Charing Cross Road and a smartly dressed assistant would demonstrate some awful and cheap piece of Asian luthiery (they were not in the same class as today's budget offerings) and make it sing sweetly, thus sealing the deal. By the way, John McLaughlin worked there for a time, I may have run into him – I had only just mastered *Guitar Boogie Shuffle* at the time so I was nowhere near his league at all!

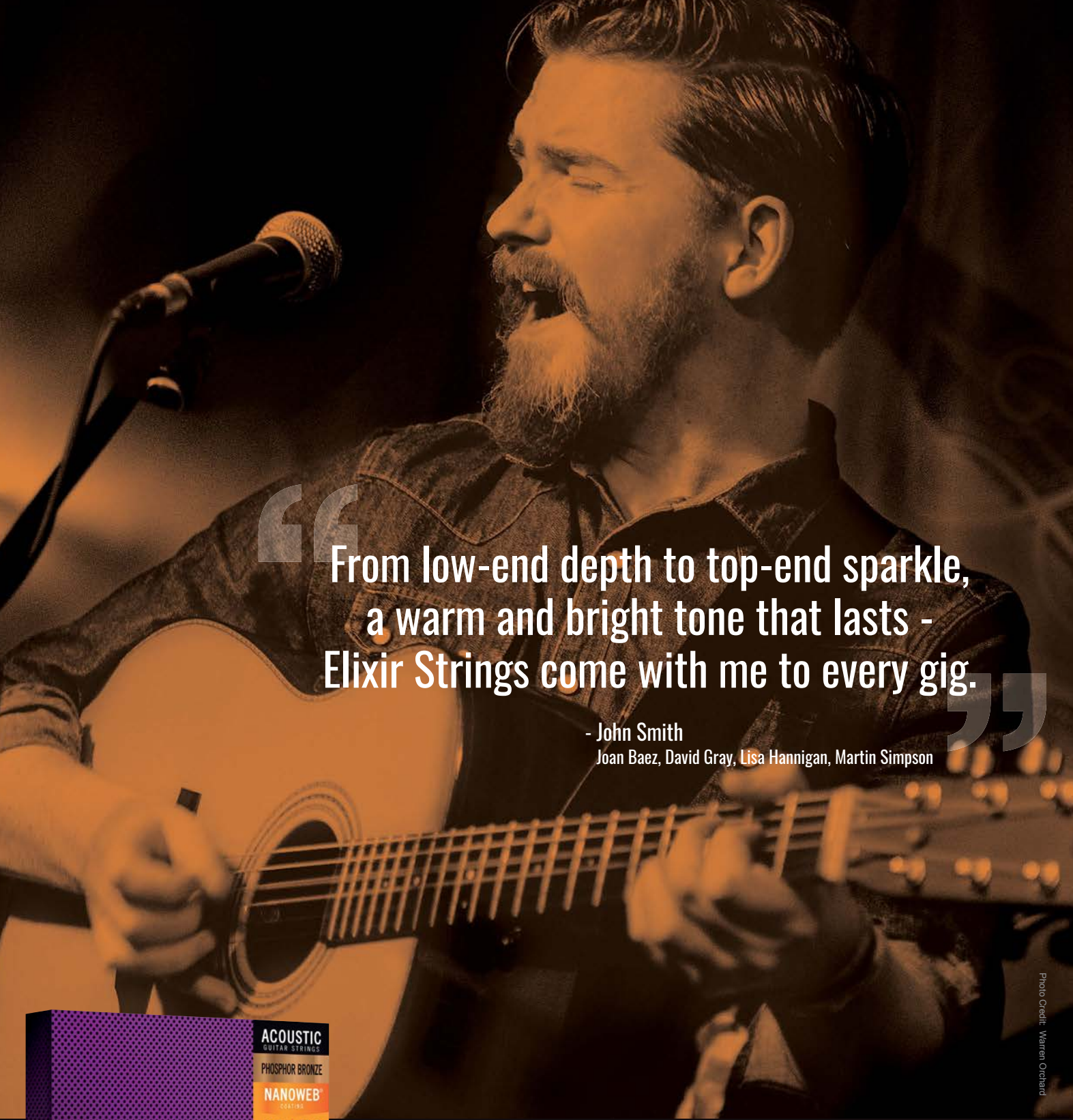
I remember many years later going to a trade show, possibly at Olympia and there was a band of young players who represented the newly emerging modern music schools for drums, guitar, bass and keyboards. The guitarist played what was probably the cheapest version of a Squier Tele available at that time through a Roland CUBE, the old pre-COSM one. He used a chorus pedal sparingly and only in certain passages. I was knocked out by his sound. I realised that it was not the gear but his sense of musicianship. He had obviously worked well on all his scales, arpeggios, riffs and phrasing but he applied his knowledge in way that enhanced the music and the group as a whole. He approached playing as a musician rather than a purveyor of fretboard gymnastics. So, by all means get that mouth watering piece of new gear but make sure that you can do justice to it first.
Alan McGain, via email

***GM* It's true what they say, Alan, it really is all in the hands – if you'd given Stevie Ray Vaughan the aforementioned Squier Strat and Roland CUBE, he'd still have sounded fantastic because he was Stevie Ray, and your talent, feel and ability will shine through regardless of what you're using. However, don't dismiss the power of great gear to break down barriers in your playing and inspire you. The right guitar, amp or effect can put you in a totally different headspace as a musician, so the right gear has a place, too!**

Wireless For Sound

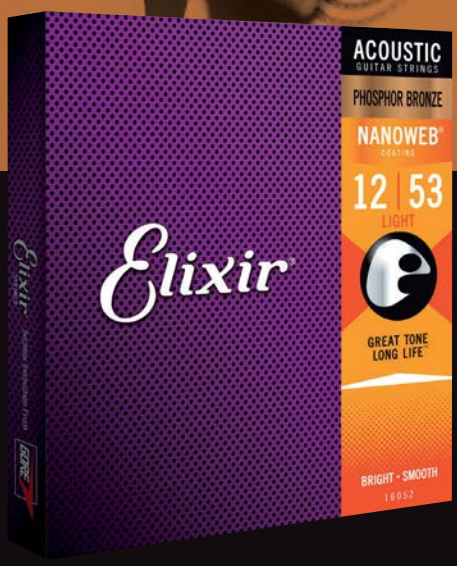
Hi there, as a newish subscriber to the magazine I would like to see a feature on wireless guitar systems – particularly for home use. I seem to have leads everywhere and I worry about dragging my Les Paul over with the vulnerability of the headstock! PS, I love the new look magazine – keep up the good work!
Laurence Calder, via email

***GM* An interesting conundrum Lawrence – most companies market their wireless systems for on-stage use, but in the modern connected home, wireless guitar systems might actually be more widely useful in that setting. After all, what's the point in being able to control your amp or pedalboard from your phone if you're tripping over cables left and right? There are loads of wireless options out there, at various prices, but check out Line 6's Relay G10 system if you want something simple, reliable, sturdy and very affordable, while Smooth Hound's Classic Wireless Guitar System fits a similar bill. In an ideal world, it'd be great to see a small, affordable bluetooth-enabled wireless guitar system designed for home use – so, gear companies, start your engines!**



> From low-end depth to top-end sparkle, a warm and bright tone that lasts - Elixir Strings come with me to every gig.
>
> - John Smith
> Joan Baez, David Gray, Lisa Hannigan, Martin Simpson

Photo Credit: Warren Orchard



TONE AS BIG AS YOUR PASSION

PHOSPHOR BRONZE ACOUSTIC STRINGS

Nothing should get in the way of your tone. Whether you have been playing the guitar for years or just getting started, Elixir® Acoustic Strings provide you with incredible tone that makes everything you play sound better...day after day.

Shop now at www.elixirstrings.com/products

GORE, Elixir, NANOWEB, POLYWEB, OPTIWEB, great tone-long life, "e" icon and other designs are trademarks of W. L. Gore & Associates. © 1997-2017 W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc.

READER BOARDS

Gigging veteran **JOHN GREEN** was never really happy with his multi-effects sound, so decided it was time to get back to the old school, but with quality at the forefront of his mind...

KIT LIST

John Green

- **PEDALS IN ORDER**
  - TC Electronic PolyTune2
  - TC Electronic HyperGravity compressor
  - Fulltone OCD 1.7
  - Rock Your Repaired Amp Klone
  - Boss CH-1 Super Chorus
  - Mooer Slow Engine
  - Keeley DynaTrem tremolo
  - JHS Mini Bomb
  - Seymour Duncan Vapor Trail
- **PATCH CABLES**
  - Van Damme Pro Grade Classic XKE & EBS Premium Gold Flat patch cable
- **POWER SUPPLY**
  - Diago PS10
- **PEDALBOARD**
  - Aclam Smart Track S2

What inspired this set-up?
"I'd been using guitar processors for a few years - they're versatile, but I'd never been completely comfortable with their sound. I'd been watching the growth in the pedals market, and their increased sophistication in terms of buffering and sound efficiency, and finally decided to take the plunge and go back to a pedalboard. I did a lot of research first and chose pedals with good components, as I wanted 100 per cent reliability."

Tell us about the journey...
"I've been in bands since the 1960s, and spent most of that time searching for the perfect tone, although I think your idea of a great tone evolves over the years. But the journey's most of the fun isn't it? When I started out in the 60s I bought a mail-order amp and made my own 2x12 cabinet. Then I bought a red Hofner Galaxie for £25 from a guy, and he threw in a new Dallas Rangemaster Treble Booster! I used it until the 80s then got rid of it - if only I'd known how much it would be worth today!"

Is there a pedal you'd like to add?
"Not right now, but with new boutique makers setting up all the time, who can tell when my fancy might get tickled? My present set-up gives me what I want - an articulate, but slightly amp-pushed sound. Leaving the RYRA pedal on all the time provides most of that. The Fulltone OCD gives me gain for some solos. I'm loving the Mooer Slow Engine, which gives the effect of turning up your guitar volume from zero for each note. Jeff Beck does the same thing with his little finger on his Strat's volume knob."

What guitars and amps do you use with your board?
"I own two Gibson Les Pauls and various Epiphones, but I'm going through a prolonged Stratocaster period at the moment. On stage I use a 2010 Olympic White USA Standard Strat fitted with Kinman Blues pickups, or sometimes a Mexican 50s Classic Strat in Surf Green fitted with the Seymour Duncan 'Everything Axe' pickup set, which are single-coil sized humbuckers. My amp is a Marshall JCM 2000 60-watt TSL601 combo; I don't need anything louder, and certainly not heavier these days..."

What lessons have you learned putting this board together?
"To be in a sceptical frame of mind when researching on the internet - there are lot of axes being ground out there! As I bought an Aclam board - a terrific invention that uses neat rubberised clamps to hold your pedals - I ended up doing a lot of unclamping and re-clamping. Lay out and connect your pedals first, so you can fiddle around with the sequence before fitting things. I ignored the advice 'experiment with the order' as I thought the 'conventional' sequence was gospel - it isn't. I then experimented and found a pedal order that sounded best to my ears tone-wise and with minimal hiss!"

SHOW US YOUR BOARD

To be in with a chance of seeing your pedalboard in the mag, email the details and an image to **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com**

NOTTINGHAM CITY Guitars

QUALITY VINTAGE & USED GUITARS

- Selling quality vintage, rare & used guitars.
- All the usual suspects including – Fender, Gibson, Rickenbacker, Gretsch & Guild.
- We are dealers for new James Trussart Custom Guitars & Rickenbacker.
- Instruments are set-up and sold with a twelve month guarantee. CITES Certificates supplied as required.
- Our in-house workshop offers set-ups, repairs, re-frets, restorations, hand wired pickups, electrical work and re-finishing.
- We stock Cornell amplification & pedals, Effectrode Audiophile pedals, Mastery Bridge, Luxe Capacitors, Sfarzo & D'Addario strings and a range of guitar accessories and spares.
- We buy and part exchange quality instruments worldwide.

T: 0115 950 5909 | M: 07850 586 625 | E: andy@nottinghamcityguitars.com

www.nottinghamcityguitars.com Follow us on

SET-UP · REPAIRS · PICKUPS · SPARES · RESTORATIONS

Fender · CORNELL · Gibson · Rickenbacker · GRETSCH · MASTERY · effectrode

7 Woolpack Lane, Lace Market, Nottingham NG1 1GA

DV MARK

GREG HOWE *signature*

MPT

The DV LITTLE GH 250 fits huge power, tone and convenience in my guitar case!

Photo by Fred Morledge

250W @ 4ohms / 150W @ 8 ohms, two channels, on board reverb

DV LITTLE BAG OPTIONAL

LBS. 5.73
KG. 2,6
↔ 8.86"/22,5cm
↙ 9.84"/25cm
↕ 3.15"/8cm

MARK WORLD

dvmark.it

Vintage TIME MACHINES

1960S DI MAURO GRAND BOUCHE

Feel the Django vibes with this Selmer-inspired French acoustic from the swinging 60s

VITAL STATISTICS

1960s Di Mauro Grand Bouche

- **PRICE:** £2,079
- **MANUFACTURER:** Di Mauro
- **TYPE:** Selmer-Maccaferri-style acoustic guitar
- **REVERB SELLER:** Cranes Music reverb.com/uk/shop/cranesmusic
- **SEE MORE:** reverb.com/item/1703771-di-mauro-grand-bouche-1960s

In recent editions of Vintage Time Machines, we've looked a number of defiantly rock 'n' roll electrics. Today, we're training our sights on something a bit different: a Di Mauro Grand Bouche acoustic jazz guitar from the 1960s, currently listed by Cranes Music in Swansea.

This instrument is what historically has been referred to as a 'gypsy jazz' guitar, though more and more the frenetic acoustic style is being known as 'hot club jazz', 'jazz manouche' or simply 'Django-style jazz'. And with good reason, as this genre's hallmarks are almost entirely associated with one player – the great Django Reinhardt.

Key to the sound of the genre are the unique guitars Django used, which were made by Selmer, originally under the direction of Mario Maccaferri. These guitars remain extremely coveted by jazz manouche enthusiasts today.

Selmer produced fewer than a thousand of this type of guitar when they were made between around 1932 and 1952, but by that point, a number of other builders had adopted the style. Today's guitar represents one such example, and comes from the workshop of Antoine Di Mauro.

Like Maccaferri, Di Mauro immigrated to France from Italy where had built classical guitars and mandolins. Setting up shop in Paris, Di Mauro was one of many luthiers that focused on building guitars based on the earlier Selmer templates to serve the many jazz musicians of the city. These guitars were designed to project and be heard through the rest of a hot jazz combo, as well as the noisy clatter of a Parisian cafe.

To that end, this Di Mauro model features a large D-shaped soundhole also known as a 'Grand Bouche' ('large mouth') – though Di Mauro also made guitars with a smaller soundhole that offered a tighter sound for lead playing. Other Selmer-like features found on this instrument include a floating bridge and trapeze tailpiece.

Antoine Di Mauro's guitars are most celebrated for their magnificent sound

Compared to authentic Maccaferri-era Selmers – as well as the work of contemporaries such as Favino and Antoine's brother Joseph – Di Mauro's work has historically been ranked in the lower tier in terms of craftsmanship, with more basic bracing patterns and less refined features. Then as now, his guitars were considered more player-grade instruments, which the ample road wear, repair work, and asking price on this specimen seem to validate.

For guitar players, however, Antoine Di Mauro's guitars are most celebrated for their magnificent sound. It projects and sings and delivers that unmistakable Django Reinhardt magic with every swinging strum.

CODAMUSIC

Fender Custom Shop

WHEN YOU'RE READY

A Custom Shop guitar embodies everything Fender has learned over 60 years of building the world's most revered electric solidbodies. The finest materials, all the right details, handbuilt in Corona, California – it's the guitar of your dreams, realised.

WE HAVE THE GUITAR FOR YOU

Coda Music is Europe's biggest and best Fender Custom Shop dealer, so whether you want a perfect New Old Stock, vintage-correct model, or the heaviest of Heavy Relics with a raft of custom playability tweaks, you'll find it here and with over 100 in stock in one store you won't find a better selection anywhere.

UNIQUE TO US, UNIQUE TO YOU

Our extensive in-store stock includes many custom ordered guitars, built to our own exacting specs after years of buying, selling and playing these fabulous instruments.

CAN WE BUILD IT?

Yes we can! If you have that extra special something in mind, we can work with you to make it a reality. Custom orders can be ready in a matter of months and cost less than you might think – call us, email us or drop in to discuss your perfect combination of features.

www.coda-music.com

51a High Street, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3AH t: 01438 350 815 e: stevenage@coda-music.co.uk
Acoustic Centre 27b Church Lane, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3QW t: 01438 350815 e: acoustics@coda-music.com

Instant decision 9 months 0% finance
available on all new products over £300 on our website

Getty Images

WALTER BECKER

1950-2017

The Guitar Magazine was saddened to hear of the death of Steely Dan founder and multi-instrumentalist, Walter Becker, who passed in September following an undisclosed illness, he was 67.

Queens native Becker formed Steely Dan in California in 1971 alongside his songwriting partner Donald Fagen, whom he had met when they were studying at New York's Bard College. The pair had been successful songwriters and session players on the East Coast, but their move out west would see the duo form the creative nucleus of the jazz-rock pioneers, as they wrangled a revolving cast of session players on Steely Dan's records, starting with their classic debut, 1972's *Can't Buy A Thrill*.

A talented guitar player who learned the blues from his neighbour, Spirit guitarist Randy California, Becker initially played bass in the band. However, as Steely Dan's regular line-up evolved throughout the 1970s, Becker switched to six-string, becoming the band's primary guitarist for 1975's *Katy Lied*, as well as contributing backing vocals to several tracks.

Steely Dan had a number of hit singles, including *Reelin' In The Years*, *Do It Again*, *Dirty Work* and their biggest US hit, 1974's *Rikki Don't Lose That Number*. However, by the end of the 70s, the partnership between Becker and Fagen would be dissolved for over a decade. The band's final album, *Gaucho*, was released in 1980, but its birth was beset by problems personal, musical and legal – notably issues related to Becker's drug addiction – and in 1981, they parted ways, and Becker moved to Hawaii with his family.

It proved to be a smart move for Becker, who got clean and in his own words became an "avocado rancher and self-styled critic of the contemporary scene." Farming aside, the 1980s also saw him making the move to behind the mixing desk, producing a number of albums for the likes of Michael Franks, Rickie Lee Jones and China Crisis.

> *"He was smart as a whip, an excellent guitarist and a great songwriter"*
> **Donald Fagen**

By the mid-80s Becker and Fagen had rekindled their friendship and began writing together again. In 1993, Becker produced Fagen's *Kamakiriad*, album and within a year the pair were back touring as Steely Dan. The 90s saw the band tour periodically, while Becker released his first solo album, the wryly titled *11 Tracks Of Whack* in 1994.

In 2000, a new Dan album finally appeared – *Two Against Nature* would win four Grammy Awards, and provide a suitable fanfare for Fagen and Becker to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame in 2001. The final Steely Dan studio album was 2003's *Everything Must Go*, where Becker would play guitar, bass, and sing his only Dan lead vocal, on the track *Slang Of Ages*.

Steely Dan have continued to tour ever since, however back in July, Becker missed their Classic East and West shows with an unspecified illness. He died on 3 September 2017.

As news of his passing spread, tributes poured in from all corners of the musical world, but it was Fagen's tribute that perhaps encapsulated him best, "He was smart as a whip, an excellent guitarist and a great songwriter," Fagen wrote in a statement on his website. "He was cynical about human nature, including his own, and hysterically funny. Like a lot of kids from fractured families, he had the knack of creative mimicry, reading people's hidden psychology and transforming what he saw into bubbly, incisive art."

Fagen plans to continue to tour with Steely Dan in tribute to Becker, adding "I intend to keep the music we created together alive as long as I can with the Steely Dan band."

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Vote now in our 2017 Gear Of The Year awards

As another year draws to a close, it's time to look back on the new guitars, amplifiers, effects and accessories that rocked your world in 2017. We've whittled the year in gear down to a shortlist, and now it's time for you to have your say by voting in a range of categories.

The wider democratic process might have produced some shocking results over the last couple of years, but rest assured that there are no losers in this race – every piece of kit we've nominated has impressed our panel of expert reviewers and has *The Guitar Magazine*'s stamp of approval. In addition, everyone who votes in our Gear Of The Year poll will be entered into a competition to win a very special prize, the details of which will be announced online soon. The polls are open now – visit the link below to make your voice heard!

theguitarmagazine.com/goty2017

Polls are open now and close on 3 November 2017

www.guitars4you.co.uk

Specialist in fine new and used classic guitars

Tel: 01335 345777 - Mon-Sat 9am-7pm

Showroom Visits: Appointment only - please call beforehand

USED PRS SELECTION

PRS McCarty Gold Top Soapbar - used/2008 ..... £1,490
PRS McCarty Rosewood - tortoiseshell - used/2000 ..... £1,890
PRS McCarty Limited Edition Rosewood - Teal Black - used/1999 £3,190
PRS Artist 11 Limited Edition Dark Cherry Sunburst - used/1994 £3,190
PRS Singlecut 10 Top - bird inlays - charcoalburst - used/2007 ... £1,690
PRS Mira Flame Top - used/2008 - violin amber sunburst £1,125
PRS Starla - silver sparkle - used/2011 ..... £1,099
PRS 513 Rosewood - McCarty Tobacconburst - used/2007 ..... £3,290
PRS 513 Rosewood - dark cherry sunburst - used/2004 ..... £3,290
PRS Modern Eagle - used/2005 - old natural £4,295

SELECT FENDER CUSTOM SHOP

Custom Shop 52 Heavy Relic Tele - nocaster blonde £2,599
Custom Shop 63 Journeyman Relic Tele Custom - sunburst £3,159
Custom Shop 69 Journeyman Relic Strat - sunburst £2,899
Custom Shop NAMM Limited Edition 55 Journeyman Relic Strat £3,159
Custom Shop 1960 Relic Strat - lake placid blue £2,549
Custom Shop 1960 Relic Strat - vintage white £2,649
Custom Shop NAMM Limited Edition 1960 Heavy Relic Strat £3,599
Masterbuilt Yuri Shishkov '63' Journeyman Relic Strat - sunburst.... £4,969
Custom Shop NAMM Limited Edition '63' Journeyman Relic Strat £3,159
Custom Shop NAMM Limited Edition '63' Journeyman Relic Strat £3,159

Over 50 Custom Shop Strats and Teles in stock

A FEW TASTY NEW & USED GUITARS

Collings CL Jazz Tobacco Sunburst - used/2008 ..... £6,399
Edwards SA135LTS (ES335) - vintage cherry £890
Fender 1979 Strat hard tail - black £1,290
Fender Custom Shop 56 NOS Strat - fiesta red £2,699
Fender Custom Shop 58 Journeyman Relic Strat - taos turquoise £2,590
Fender Custom Shop 59 Relic Esquire - faded taos turquoise £2,690
Fender Custom Shop 62 Heavy Relic Strat - 3 tone sunburst £2,799
Fender Custom Shop 62 Journeyman Relic Strat - lake placid blue £2,699
Fender Custom Shop 62 Journeyman Relic Strat - olympic white..... £2,699
Fender Custom Shop Post Modern Relic Strat - used/2015..... £1,749
Fender Masterbuilt 1965 Relic Strat - G. Fessler - aged fiesta red - 2011 ..... £3,980
Fender Masterbuilt Jason Smith '63' Strat - surf green - used/2012.... £3,890
Fender Masterbuilt Todd Krause 1963 Relic Strat - used/2015..... £4,890
Fender Masterbuilt Todd Krause 57 Relic Strat - black - used/2015 .... £3,890
Fender Strat hard tail - natural - circa 1974 ..... £2,390
Fender Strat Plus - black - used - circa 1988 ..... £950
Fender Tele Custom - black - circa 1974 ..... £2,775
Fender USA Strat Plus - sunburst - used/1991 ..... £975
Fender USA Strat Plus - used/1988 - midnight wine £975
G&L ASAT Classic - butterscotch blonde - used/2007 ..... £975
Gibson Les Paul 1959 Reissue Tom Murphy Aged - used/2012..... £5,275
Gibson ES330 Single pick-up - cherry - 1962 ..... £2,000
Gibson ES330 sunburst - circa 1965 ..... £3,189
Gibson ES330TD - sunburst - circa 1966 ..... £2,990
Gibson ES345 Stereo - faded cherry - used/2007 ..... £2,379
Gibson Les Paul Classic - Bullion Gold - 1991 ..... £1,990
Gibson Les Paul Classic Premium Plus - used/2001 - dark burst .. £2,190
Gibson Les Paul Standard - black - Used/1988 ..... £1,469
Gibson Les Paul Standard Desert Burst - Used/2004 ..... £1,649
Gibson Tennessean + Bigsby - used/1997 - Sunrise Orange £1,479
Gibson Tom Murphy Aged 1959 Les Paul Reissue - 2005 ..... £5,390
Gretsch Nashvile G6120 circa 1967 ..... £2,900
K Line Truxton - black - used/2016 ..... £1,649
PRS Custom 22 Artist Pack - 20th Anniversary - 2005 ..... £2,490
PRS Custom 22 Gold Top - stoptail - used/2006 ..... £1,599
PRS Custom 22 Livingston Lemondrop - used/2013 ..... £1,999
PRS Custom 24 - violet - 59/09's - used/2014 ..... £1,990
PRS Custom 24 + bird inlays - used/1997 - cherry sunburst £1,699
PRS Modern Eagle - stoptail - abalone - used/2004 ..... £3,699
PRS SC250 Singlecut - '10' Top - natural - used/2008 ..... £1,690
PRS Swamp Ash Special - black sunburst - used/2003 ..... £1,440
Rickenbacker Combo 900 - used/1965 ..... £1,290
Tom Anderson T- Classic - tobacco burst - used/2005 ..... £1,599
Yamaha SA1100 Semi - Made in Japan - natural - circa 1990 ..... £1,079

More tasty guitars in stock - visit www.guitars4you.co.uk

WANTED – QUALITY USED GUITARS | EXPRESS MAIL ORDER

E-mail: mark@guitars4you.co.uk

XGIFT17

Subscribe to The Guitar Magazine

YES! I would like to subscribe to *The Guitar Magazine*

☐ Just £44.90 every annually by Direct Debit and get FREE Audio Technica M30X headphones

☐ I wish to purchase as a gift subscription

(Please supply gift recipient details on a separate piece of paper)

YOUR DETAILS

Title Forename Surname

Email address +

Address

Postcode

Phone number

Mobile+

+ Please enter this information so that Anthem Publishing Ltd, can keep you informed about your subscription via email or free text messages.

Anthem Publishing would like to keep you up to date with news, events, and special offers, and occasionally request feedback from you. Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate how you would like to be contacted. You can choose more than one. ☐ Email ☐ Post ☐ Telephone ☐ SMS ☐ No thanks

Complete this form below if paying by Direct Debit

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY DIRECT DEBIT

Originator's Identification Number 8 3 7 1 8 1

DIRECT Debit

1 Name of your Bank or Building Society

2 Name of account holder(s)

3 Branch sort code ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

4 Account number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

5 Instruction to your Bank/Building Society Please pay Anthem Publishing Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Anthem Publishing and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s) Date

DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE

Direct Debit is only available in the UK. If you're not entirely satisfied with *Guitar & Bass* at any time during your subscription, you can cancel it and receive a refund for any unmailed copies

CHRISTMAS OFFERS FOR INTERNATIONAL READERS

Save up to 50% on an international subscription. Sorry, no gift available on these prices.

☐ **Europe** €38 every 6 months by continuous card payment **save 35%**

☐ **USA/Canada** $39 every 6 months by continuous card payment **save 50%**

☐ **Australia** $60 every 6 months by continuous card payment **save 30%**

☐ **Rest of World** £30 every 6 months by continuous card payment

Please debit my card

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Maestro ☐ Am Ex

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Valid from ☐☐ ☐☐ Expiry date ☐☐ ☐☐ Issue no ☐☐

Signature(s) Date

I enclose a cheque made payable to Anthem Publishing for £

Send your completed form to: **Freepost Anthem Publishing** yes its that simple (UK ONLY)

Offer ends **31 December 2017** Code **XGIFT17**

Your subscription will start with the next available issue. The Guitar Magazine is published 12 times per year.

25% saving based on UK cover price, and is only available to UK subscribers paying by Direct Debit. All other savings are off the local cover price, and are available to customers in the UK, Europe, Australia and North America only.

If at any time you wish to stop receiving email communications from Anthem Publishing, you can unsubscribe using the link in any email you receive and or opt out via shop.anthem-publishing.com/privacy

About your free gift

- **Advanced build quality** and engineering
- **40mm drivers** with rare earth magnets
- **Tuned for enhanced detail**, with excellent midrange definition
- **Circumaural design** contours around the ears
- **Excellent sound** isolation in loud environments
- **Worth £77**

Your Christmas gift offer!

- **FREE** Audio Technica M30X Headphones (worth £77)
- **Save 25%** off the shop price
- **Just £44.90 every 12 months** by Direct Debit
- **Free UK delivery** direct to your door
- Never miss an issue

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

The Guitar Magazine

FREE Audio Technica M30X Headphones

when you subscribe to *The Guitar Magazine*

WORTH £77!

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE!

3 *easy ways* to subscribe

anthem-publishing.com/guitar
Entering code **XGIFT17**

0844 856 0642**
Quoting code **XGIFT17**
**Calls cost 7 pence per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

Please complete the order form opposite

CUSTOM MADE
VOLUME
VOLUME

REVIVE YOUR 335

Get pro tone from your Gibson or Epiphone

Story **Chris Vinnicombe**

Gibson's thinline Electric Spanish guitars have been used to give the world some of the greatest rock, pop and blues guitar tones in the history of hot wax. From Chuck Berry, BB and Freddie King to Clapton and Carlton to Bernard Butler, Noel Gallagher and Dave Grohl, the list of artists who've rocked a Gibson semi is as glittering as it is varied.

Much like the other three members of the 'big four' that have carved out a place on the electric guitar's Mount Rushmore – the Telecaster, Stratocaster and Les Paul – it's hard to imagine popular music as we know it without the soulful stamp of semi-acoustic Gibsons deeply embedded in its grooves.

If you're an ES-335 owner already, we're preaching to the choir. If you aren't? There's a reason that some tonehounds refer to these guitars as 'burst killers'. That creaking sound you can hear? That's your wallet, grimacing at the inevitability that flicking through the following pages will cause gear-lust to strike.

The good news is that you don't have to spend a fortune to sound great. Whether you want to get more from a Gibson or you think hot-rodding your Epiphone will take it to the next level – or even if your thinline semi sports another brand name on its headstock – read on for tone tips, easy mods, upgrades and buying advice to help you along the way. Join us then, as we go through the f-hole... >

The Gibson ES-345 was introduced in 1959, a year after the 335. This first-year example still has its original case and PAF humbuckers

Family History

Of all the classic electric guitar designs, only the Stratocaster rivals the ES-335 for versatility – and it was a hit from the off...

It's hard to think of a guitar-based musical genre in which the ES-335 hasn't featured in some way. The variety of sounds on offer resulted from a fusion of design ideas, as Gibson responded to the needs of its mid-1950s customer base.

Applying the company's archtop heritage to the new demand for electric guitars that were more controllable at higher volumes, Gibson's then-president Ted McCarty "came up with the idea of putting a solid block of maple in an acoustic model. It would get some of the same tone as a regular solidbody, plus the instrument's hollow wings would vibrate and we'd get a combination of an electric solidbody and a hollowbody."

This principle wasn't a million miles away from Les Paul's Log prototype that Gibson rejected shortly before the United States of America entered World War II. Yet rather than starting with a solid centre-block and adding hollow wings to make the instrument look and feel more like a guitar, McCarty inserted the centre-block into a double-cutaway, 16-inch thinline archtop – it was a natural evolution from the thinline-bodied ES-225, ES-350T and Byrdland that had arrived in 1955 following player requests for guitars that were easier to handle.

In addition to its feedback-reducing properties, the hybrid ES-335 design would deliver an even balance, light overall weight and a comfortable seated playing experience – addressing the concerns of many late-50s Gibson customers, for whom the small and heavy Les Paul Model was still something of a white elephant.

Yet when it entered production in April 1958, the revolutionary ES-335 benefited from the various technological advances that had recently been applied to the Les Paul, in the shape of new PAF humbucking pickups, a tune-o-matic bridge and stop tailpiece. Most sources agree that 317 of Gibson's new thinline semis left the factory that year – 267 in sunburst (ES-335TD) and 50 in natural (ES-335TDN), marketed at $267.50 and $282.50 respectively. The upscale ES-345 and ES-355 models were officially introduced in 1959, although 10 ES-355s shipped in late 1958.

Nearly six decades later, 1958 might appear to be the year that King Midas came to work for Gibson's R&D department. In reality, the other big launches that year – the sunburst Les Paul, the Flying V and the Explorer – all crashed and burned by 1961 and had to wait to be rediscovered by new generations of players. Not so the ES-335, which was an immediate hit and has remained in continuous production ever since.

Numerous variants would be spawned in the decades to come, but early close-cousins the Epiphone Sheraton (1958) and Riviera (1961) have obtained classic status in their own right. Modern entry-level versions have been responsible for many a guitarist's first encounter with an ES-335 type guitar – the Epiphone Dot (street price £349) is still one of the best bang-for-buck electric guitars on the market and it offers huge upgrade potential – turn the page to find out how... >

> The revolutionary ES-335 benefited from the various technological advances that had recently been applied to the Les Paul

Nuts & Bolts

Before you even plug your guitar in – and this goes for any electric, not just thinline semis – you can have a huge influence on your amplified tone simply by ensuring that your guitar is set up to your liking, in tune and intonated properly. It's a good, old-fashioned domino effect: a guitar that is comfortable to play will help you relax and play better, and you'll sound better into the bargain as your playing becomes more confident, fluid and articulate.

Experiment with different string gauges and action heights and find the combination that you like the best. Our preference is a set of 0.011s on a Gibson as the nominal 24.75-inch scale length allows for easy bends while still offering a little fight. A heavier set will also help with stability if you have a vibrato installed.

For a slinkier feel with a stopbar tailpiece, try 'top-wrapping'. Instead of threading the strings through the back of your tailpiece in the traditional manner, thread them in from the front and wrap them back over the top. Billy Gibbons is a fan, and Joe Bonamassa swears that it makes a set of 0.011s feel like a set of 0.0105s. Top-wrapping also allows you to screw the tailpiece right down for maximum resonance without creating a break angle over the saddles that's too steep and risking string failure as a result.

On the subject of stop tailpieces, some vintage tonehounds profess to prefer the sonic properties of lightweight aluminium. Locking units from TonePros are another popular retrofit. 1965 saw the arrival of the trapeze tailpiece on the ES-335, and while they have their detractors, there are those who like the slightly more relaxed feel that comes from the shallower break angle and there are plenty of spooky textures accessible by playing behind the bridge.

We're not going to make many friends at retrofit tuner companies here but honestly, the majority of tuning difficulties have very little to do with your machineheads and are likely down to friction at the nut or bridge – you'll often hear a tell-tale 'ping' when tuning if a string is binding in the nut. This can be eased with a lubricant such as Big Bends Nut Sauce or cheap and cheerful pencil graphite.

The choice of nut material itself is also worthy of consideration. Unbleached bone is the preferred choice for many luthiers. Aside from benefits to tone, sustain and tuning stability, it's also mildly self-lubricating and porous, so it absorbs any additional lube you apply and stays slippery, reducing friction. Most bone used in the guitar industry is a by-product of animal farming – vegetarian and vegan-friendly alternatives include Micarta (a compound of phenolic resins) and Tusq (a man-made alternative to ivory).

USED AROUND THE WORLD

AFFORDABLE, DURABLE AND INNOVATIVE.

On-Stage®

STANDS, CABLES, MICS, PEDALS, PERCUSSION AND MUSICAL ACCESSORIES.

jhs
www.jhs.co.uk

OWN THE TONE™

DANELECTRO®

The New '66

Insanely great reproduction of the 1966 classic.
Single coil neck pickup with Lipstick® Humbucking pickup pair in bridge. Coil tap switch. German carved top.
Bound body with F hole. Awesome tone and feel.
The finest guitar you have ever played. Period.

Danelectro.official
DanelectroUSA
Danelectro_official

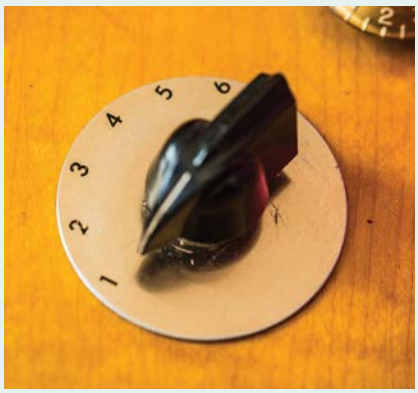
jhs
www.jhs.co.uk

Saddle Sore

The tune-o-matic bridge was another slice of Ted McCarty genius; it debuted on the Super 400 in 1953 before finding its way onto the Les Paul Custom the following year. In its first ABR-1 incarnation, the saddles were nickel-plated brass. In an effort to minimise rattle and vibrations, Gibson was using nylon saddles on several models by the mid-1960s. These days you can easily swap your saddles for a different material – it's an affordable mod that can have a dramatic effect.

Graphite and the aforementioned Tusq have their fans – the former is claimed to reduce string breakages and the latter offers bone-like sustain and harmonics. Reducing friction is always a good idea when using a Bigsby, and nylon saddles work particularly well for that. They also have a somewhat softer attack and sweeter high-end than brass or steel and deliver a tone that sounds a little more 'vintage' to our ears.

Some players – Joe Bonamassa included – have been known to try a half rice/half chips approach with metal saddles for the wound strings and nylon for the plain strings. Experiment and see what works for you!



WHAT THE HELL IS A VARITONE ANYWAY?

Gibson's original ES-345 and ES-355 models came equipped with a six-position rotary switch called a Varitone. If you've ever searched online for an explanation of what a Varitone does and how it works then we'd wager the phrase 'tone suck' wouldn't have been be too far away – the Varitone seem to be one of those subjects that people get irrationally worked up about on internet guitar forums, much like relic'ing and the Second Amendment. Kings Freddie and BB seemed to put their Varitones to pretty good use, but on the other hand, there's a 14-year-old in Idaho who says that you should rip that tone-sucking POS out of your guitar immediately. Who to believe?

In simple terms, unlike the regular passive tone controls elsewhere on your guitar, the Varitone doesn't act as a low-pass filter, it's effectively a notch filter that takes preset slices out of the midrange, resulting in a selection of tones that are increasingly more nasal than their full-fat bypass equivalents. An 1.5H choke is housed beneath the treble pickup and it fixes the range of the notch. The first position on the switch is the bypass, while positions 2-6 traditionally cycle through 1,000pF, 3,000pF, 0.01µF, 0.03µF, and 0.22µF capacitors. Each cap is paired with a 10M resistor to avoid pops when switching.

The bypass setting itself is the cause of much consternation as many ES-345 and 355 owners have argued that their guitars sound better with the Varitone circuit removed altogether, but from an electronic standpoint the difference in frequency response is negligible – in an A/B test the contrast between the sound of your regular tone pot set wide open and the sound of the tone potentiometer removed from the circuit altogether would be considerably more pronounced.

Of course, not all Varitones were created equal. Over the years, changes to the recipe have resulted in bypass modes being less than transparent on a variety of Gibson and Epiphone models. Issues caused by summing out of phase pickups to mono with a stereo ES-345 or 355 model can also muddy the waters but there's no doubt that the original Varitone circuit does offer some cool and interesting tones for funky chords and expressive lead lines that go way beyond the regular ES-335 palette – as ever, let your ears decide!

The Towner Down Tension Bar allows you to get a stopbar-style break angle over the bridge

Hardware Store

We're Bigsby fans here at *The Guitar Magazine*, and we make no apologies for it. As long as it's been correctly lined up during the installation process and your bridge and nut slots are well-lubricated (stop smirking at the back), a set of strings that have been properly stretched in should offer relatively trouble-free tuning – even with fairly vigorous use of the whammy bar.

When it comes to fitting a Bigsby it's a straightforward enough mod, but the model that you choose will likely depend upon how squeamish you are about drilling holes in your guitar's top. Whichever you choose, we'd always recommend going for the USA-made, sandcast aluminium version.

A Bigsby B7 (above left) looks the part on an ES-335 from a vintage perspective and features an integrated tension bar – this creates enough of a break angle over the bridge to stop strings leaping out of their saddles when attacked with venom – but the unit is screwed directly into the top as well as through the end-pin hinge plate. Four small end-pin screw holes aren't too obtrusive but the same can't be said for the two-hole 'snakebite' left behind by a B7 on the guitar's top, should you decide to remove it.

If you've fitted a B7 to a guitar that previously had a stop-tailpiece rather than a trapeze, you might find you want to cover up the now-redundant stopbar stud holes. Aside from employing the services of a luthier to fill the holes permanently, options include a reproduction of the 'Custom Made' plaques used by Gibson (visit philadelphialuthiertools.com and they'll engrave one with whatever wording you like for $22.99) or if you fancy going down the DIY route, we've seen round-head bolts, pearl and nylon studs and various other items used to cap off the holes.

> Which Bigsby model you choose to fit will likely depend upon how squeamish you are about drilling holes in your guitar's top

Another thing to consider is that an ES-335's ground wire is usually connected to one of the stoptail stud bushings – with the stopbar tailpiece removed the ground wire will need to be relocated. Gibson's factory solution for ES-335s with Bigsbys was to route the ground wire through a small hole near the rear strap button, then screw the Bigsby's hinge plate down on top of the exposed wire. Alternatively you can drill through the rear wall of the bridge pickup cavity into the treble-side post hole for the tune-o-matic bridge and send the ground wire through the drilled hole, anchored by the bridge post at one end and soldered to the bridge pickup's braided wire shielding at the other.

If all of that sounds like a pain in the tailpiece, you have other options. A Bigsby B3 or B6 doesn't have a tension bar, so you don't need to drill into the arched top of your beloved instrument. However, neither option creates much downward pressure on the bridge due to there being a very shallow break >

The Bigsby B6CB (above) offers a less fiddly strap button arrangement than the B7

BE QUIET AND DRIVE

One of the major unintentional upsides of the fact that more and more venues are insisting on whisper-quiet stage levels these days is that it makes low-wattage amplifiers and feedback-prone guitars with unpotted pickups more viable for gigging than they've been in decades. When stacks were king, it was almost impossible for all but the most pampered stadium rockers to make fully hollowbody guitars behave, and even centre-block equipped guitars such as the ES-335 could be problematic in some instances.

F-holes stuffed with rags or foam are probably less necessary these days, but something that's relatively unexplored is how the resonance frequency of individual speaker types can impact on the onset of feedback. While auditioning speakers for a bespoke amp build recently, we noticed that two ostensibly similar alnico-magnet, 12-inch drivers – the Celestion Blue and the Warehouse Black & Blue – interacted with the guitar very differently.

Feedback happened a lot sooner with the Warehouse speaker to the extent that our ES-335 started to behave more like a fully hollow ES-330 and was hard to control. The reason is almost certainly that the resonance frequency of the Warehouse (106.73 Hz) is in the low-midrange danger zone that tends to promote feedback with a semi, while the Celestion's lower 75Hz rating is safely out of harm's way.

As ever, it's about the way your guitar, amplifier and speaker interact: you might find that a speaker with a higher resonance frequency adds punch to a Telecaster. If feedback is a problem when using your semi at volume, trying swapping your speaker for a driver with a lower resonance frequency rating before giving up on your guitar or amp.

angle across the saddles. What's more, the stopbar is still redundant, so you'll need to think about grounding.

So far, this doesn't sound easier but with the addition of a Towner Down Tension Bar (townerusa.com) you can create a stopbar like break angle over the bridge but still get smooth Bigsby performance thanks to the Towner's roller bar. And you won't need to relocate the ground wire either, as the Towner hooks onto your existing tailpiece studs, which you can adjust to taste. It's an ingenious 'best of both worlds' solution.

If you can find one, we'd recommend tracking down a Bigsby B6CB – it's a Gretsch part, but it has a huge advantage over the regular B6. Rather than there being a channel for the strap button to sit in, there's a central hole in the hinge plate through which the screw passes and the strap button sits on top. This not only makes it less fiddly to secure your strap but – assuming your strap button is positioned dead centre – it makes installing the B6CB with the correct alignment a breeze.

If you want to install a Bigsby B7 on your ES-335 without leaving any trace or having to relocate the ground wire then Vibramate's V7-335 kit (vibramate.com) doesn't require any drilling thanks to its system of mounting plates. The Vibramate hardware does add a little weight and there's a subtle colouration of the tone compared to a B7 that's been screwed directly into the body, but it's a great way to audition a Bigsby without creating sawdust. For an alternative ES-335 vibrato option that doesn't require drilling and has a different feel to a Bigsby, then check out the Stetsbar (www.stetsbar.com).

Pickup Lines

What if your ES-335 is playing like a dream but just doesn't cut it when you plug in? A pickup change could be in order. Retrofit pickups aren't a silver bullet for all of your tonal ills – you might find that a very good set of pickups throws the shortcomings of your guitar into sharper focus in the same way that a high-quality microphone is unlikely to disguise the imperfections in a dubious vocal performance.

That said, there are plenty of humbuckers that suffer from being rather one-dimensional compared to vintage and vintage-style units. If you feel like your pickups are constricting or strangling your guitar's natural voice then there's never been more choice when it comes to replacements.

Early ES-335s came loaded with PAF humbuckers and the extended high-end, touch-sensitivity and harmonic content offered by a really good set of PAF-style units can be a revelation. Assuming you don't want to drop second-hand car money on a set of vintage Gibson 'buckers, you won't go wrong >

TREAT PLAYING
LIKE IT'S A
DISTRACTION
FROM YOUR
DAY JOB.
D'Addario
NY
XL
COMMIT
PLAYERS CIRCLE
PLAY MORE. DO MORE. EARN MORE.
playerscircle.daddario.com

with Monty's PAFs (montysguitars.com), Tyson Tone Preachers (tysontone.com), Mojo Pickups 'Vintage' PAFs (mojopickups.co.uk), Lollar Low Wind Imperials (lollarguitars.com) or Bare Knuckle's VHII units (bareknucklepickups.co.uk).

Once your Gibson or Epiphone semi is loaded with a killer set of pickups, there's an extraordinary range of tones on offer. Head to youtube.com/theguitarmagazine to see a video of blues-rock guitarist du jour JD Simo demonstrating a remarkable array of sounds using his beloved 1962 cherry ES-335.

Know Your Tone

While we're confident that almost everyone reading this will be familiar with rolling back the tone with gain to nail Clapton's 'woman tone', but there's another cool trick that works particularly well with an ES-335. In order to add depth to the bridge pickup tone while retaining bite, first flip your pickup selector switch to the middle position. Then roll the neck pickup volume back a couple of notches, stopping at the point at which you hear the bottom end of the neck pickup shelve off. The result? You'll get a thicker version of your bridge pickup tone without any flab – it's a fantastic rhythm sound that works particularly well for filling space in a live mix if you are the only electric guitarist in a band.

Vintage Trouble's Nalle Colt is primarily a Les Paul guy but his advice is transferable for players who use vintage-style ES-335s: "I ride the volume control a lot, that's my whole thing. Since we started this band I've liked to get kind of a gritty amp and then just turn down to get it to clean up. There's something so nice when you hear that volume go up and it just feels and sounds natural.

"[For rhythm] I'm usually set about five and a half or six on a Les Paul, in the middle position. Then you can just turn down the bass pickup a little bit – it's amazing. The stuff you can do is incredible, there's a thousand sounds in it if you work at it. You've got to fight the adrenaline as usually you get on stage and end up just flipping it to the bridge pickup, but you've gotta train yourself! For me it came from watching Jimmy Page play so much, he was the master of that."

By now you should be sounding better than ever, but if you are still lacking high-end definition and clarity then a new wiring loom could provide the missing piece of the puzzle. Our own ES-335 has a Mojo Pickups (mojopickups.co.uk) 50s-style wiring harness in it with 0.022uf paper-in-oil caps, braided hook-up wires, premium pots and a switchcraft switch and jack socket. Now, we're not going to pretend that rewiring an ES-335 is a simple endeavour, but as ever, our resident guitar maintenance expert Huw Price can show you how. Visit bit.ly/dotwiring to see a step-by-step guide to installing a new wiring harness in an Epiphone Dot. Happy soldering! Get in touch via theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com and let us know how you get on.

ALRIGHT JACK

Most Gibson semis have their output jack sockets situated on the top of the guitar, behind the volume and tone controls near the tail. On such a large-bodied instrument it's unlikely to interfere with most people's playing arc, but we'd still recommend using a cable with an L-shaped plug. When the red mist descends there's less risk of a windmilling arm making contact with the plug and damaging the jack socket or worse still, cracking the top. You can also guide the lead between the body and strap in a tidier fashion.

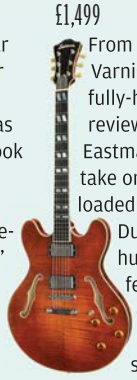
BUY IT NOW!

LOOKING FOR A THINLINE SEMI? YOU HAVE PLENTY OF OPTIONS. HERE ARE FIVE OF OUR FAVOURITES...

GIBSON MEMPHIS 1963 ES-335TD BIGSBY £3,349

This month's cover star comes courtesy of our friends at Coda Music (coda-music.com) and has the classic 'block neck' look complete with narrower horns, a Bigsby B7 tailpiece and vintage-style 'custom made' plaque. Are there many cooler guitars than this? Don't bet on it...

EASTMAN T59/V £1,499



From the same Antique Varnish range as the fully-hollow T64/V reviewed on p92, Eastman's factory-aged take on the ES-335 comes loaded with Seymour Duncan Seth Lover humbuckers and features the company's proprietary shellac finish.

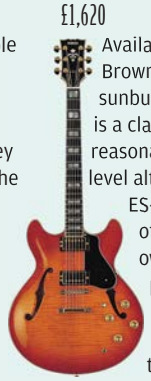
COLLINGS I-35 LC £4,995

Designed by the late, great Bill Collings and his team using a custom laminated construction technique, this highly evolved, boutique take on the ES-335 has a more compact, 15-inch body width along with stunning build quality and tones.

EPIPHONE DOT £349

Looking for an affordable entry-point into the world of the ES-335? The Epiphone Dot is it. Fantastic value for money straight out of the box, the Dot a great platform for mods and with a little TLC and some sensible upgrades it can be a serious gigging machine.

YAMAHA SA2200 £1,620



Available in either Brown or Violin-hued sunbursts, the SA2200 is a classy and very reasonably priced pro-level alternative to the ES-335 with decades of heritage all of its own. The guitar's push-push coil splits offer an even broader tonal palette, too.

OFF-WORLD
AMBIENCE
MERCURY 7
meris
Sound
NETWORK
+44 (0) 20 3008 7530
www.soundnetwork.co.uk
meris
www.meris.us

HEISTERCAMP
"GUITAR STRAPS DON'T COME BETTER THAN THIS."
-
GUITAR AND BASS MAGAZINE
PEREDUR AP GWYNEDD
PENDULUM | FAITHLESS
WWW.HEISTERCAMP.CO.UK

BLUESBOY

BACK IN BLACK

2017 has been characteristically busy for the hardest-working guitar addict in show business. We talk to Joe Bonamassa about reuniting with Black Country Communion, getting his hands on the first High Power Tweed Twins to roll off Fender's production line in nearly 60 years, and plenty more besides...

Story **Chris Vinnicombe & Josh Gardner**

"To be honest with you, it didn't look like there was going to be another Black Country Communion *anything*," admits Joe Bonamassa when we enquire as to how the group – which also comprises lead vocalist and bass player Glenn Hughes, drummer Jason Bonham and keyboardist Derek Sherinian – ended up reconvening this year to record their fourth long player, despite splitting in 2013.

The ice was broken back in April 2016 when Bonamassa called Hughes following the latter's induction into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame with Deep Purple. The two met for dinner and hatched a plan to put the band back together. Writing sessions took place later that year in October, during which Bonamassa and Hughes penned a body of material that would become *BCCIV*. Fast-forward to January 2017 and the band were recording in Hollywood with long-standing producer Kevin Shirley at the helm.

"We had to go back to EastWest Studios," Joe recalls. "It was where we did our second album. That's the most fun we ever had in the studio, and sonically it was great, too. So pretty much eight months to the day that Glenn and I had dinner, we found ourselves in EastWest Studios recording next to the Foo Fighters. There was good camaraderie, good shared experiences and good playing. I'm very proud of the album."

Bonamassa describes his approach to lead work on *BCCIV* as "more restrained," and on tracks such as lead single, *Collide*, this proves to be more exciting and dynamic than a flurry of notes: "At this point I guess I'm older and wiser. It used to be with Black Country Communion that they would just shoot me out of a cannon!"

In The Mix

With stunt guitar off the menu, Bonamassa's go-to guitars for the sessions at EastWest included his 1951 Nocaster with a PAF in the neck position, a sunburst 1955 hardtail Stratocaster and his 1959 Les Paul known as 'Skinnerburst', serial number 9-1951: "It's the best Les Paul I had for playing in E♭," he reveals. "The other records were in E, this one's in E♭. I string all my guitars with 0.011s and when you go to E♭ it doesn't feel right. But Skinner felt the best, and stayed in tune the best, in E♭."

As well as those staples, you might be surprised to learn that *BCCIV* also features a Fender Electric XII and a 1960 Rickenbacker Capri. Joe describes the Rickenbacker as "Insta-Who" and enthuses that "you plug it into any amp and it's that pre-'65, jangly Pete Townshend rhythm sound."

Joe has reunited with Glenn Hughes, Jason Bonham and Derek Sherinian in Black Country Communion

In order to give BCCIV's supersize riffs extra width, producer Kevin Shirley would often double-track Joe's rhythm guitars by dropping in guitar parts from alternative takes, rather than recording overdubs. Bonamassa also puts much of the power down to the way in which his guitar tones and Hughes' overdriven bass combine to create a heaviness that is more than the sum of its component parts.

"It's the Kossoff/Andy Fraser thing," he says. "If you solo the guitar it sounds okay, if you solo the bass it sounds okay, but if you play them both at the same time it sounds like one massive guitar. Because the bass is distorted you are getting this low end rumble that's not in what I'm playing. And we're also playing live... it's a very old-school way of doing rock 'n' roll! That's definitely part of the charm."

Signature Sound

Bonamassa's love of tweed is well documented, and for the last year or so, alongside vintage examples, he's been using a new Fender prototype modelled after a 1959 5F8-A Twin-Amp. Although Fender's current catalogue contains the 40-watt '57 Custom Twin-Amp, the company hasn't manufactured a production 5F8-A since 1960. Joe considers the 'High Power Tweed Twin' to be the greatest electric guitar amplifier ever made and he's in good company – it's also Keith Richards' live amp of choice.

On top of his usual run of live shows, Bonamassa used the prototype extensively in the studio on *BCCIV*. It also appears on the next Beth Hart record and on a new, as yet untitled solo album that he recorded in Nashville in July. Despite his best efforts, the prototype didn't break down, and he confirms, "it sounds just like the old ones".

"If you play both the bass and guitar at the same time it sounds like one massive guitar... it's a very old-school way of doing rock 'n' roll!"

"I need another signature product like I need more taxes," Joe quips. "But I went to Fender and said, why don't you make a High Power Tweed Twin? And they were like, 'Well, we're not sure if anyone's going to want them.' I said, 'There's a reason why these things are $20,000!' They're the greatest amp that Leo ever made, and one of the rarest."

Although, as Bonamassa has noted in the past, you are more likely to get trouble-free service from a 60-year-old tube amplifier than you are a 10-year-old iPhone, the march of modernity means that Fender can't make them exactly like they used to. "This is as authentic as we can get given modern parts and modern regulations," he explains.

"You've got to have a tube guard on it because apparently in 2017 people are dumb enough to go, 'You know what would be a good idea on a Sunday afternoon? I'm going to stick my hand in the back of a tube amp and grab hold of a hot glass bottle.' And the handle's different. Apparently in 1959 people didn't sue when the handle broke and their amp dropped on their foot."

The '59 Twin-Amp JB Edition will be in stores soon. Other deviations from 1959

Terms and conditions apply. Allianz Musical Insurance is a trading name of Allianz Insurance plc.

TRASH TALK

Not many players get their hands on an original korina Gibson but earlier this year, Joe added a second '58 Flying V to his collection. His first, Amos, appeared in *This Is Spinal Tap* and was previously owned by Joe's friend Norman Harris, of Norman's Rare Guitars fame. The second was found in a bin bag... and the story starts with a road trip in a vintage pickup truck. No, really.

"I traded a guitar for a '34 Ford pickup truck that happened to be in Seattle," Bonamassa explains. "I could have shipped it from Seattle to Los Angeles for about $650 or $700, but instead I decided to drive it down myself. But, y'know, 1,200 miles in a '34 Ford... let me tell you something, that is an *honest* drive...

"Long story short, we get about half-way through our journey – exactly 570 miles from Los Angeles. And I have to stop for gas in this damn thing probably every two hours, okay? It's like, 10 gallons, then 10 gallons, then 10 gallons... so I spent way more than $650 getting it back!

"Anyway, a friend of mine from Guitar Center texted me 10 photos of a Flying V at one of these gas stops, saying, 'What do you think? I know you have an original one, so how does this look?' And I was like, 'Holy shit are you kidding me?!'

"So, I get a phone call, and the story is that there's a woman up in Sacramento who was cleaning out her uncle's house after he died, and she brought the guitar in to sell – because she didn't know it was worth a dollar. And my friend from Guitar Center asked if I would be willing to fly up with him to go and see it with him.

"I was like, 'Well, it turns out that I am exactly two hours from Sacramento, I'll see you there tomorrow!' So we meet at the Guitar Center in Sacramento. And she walks with this gigbag, with *that* headstock sticking out of the top of the bag. Even though it's coming out of the wrong case, instantly, there's still no doubt that it's right, y'know what I mean? And it's just as right as rain.

"We start asking her about it, and she's like 'I was cleaning out my uncle's house for my aunt, and we found that he'd played with Lightnin' Hopkins and he was a gospel singer and a jazz musician...' I asked her where did she find it, and she goes, 'Well we found it wrapped in a trash liner...' and I was like, 'A trash bag?! Well... do you have the original case?' And she's like, 'I don't even know what the case looks like.'

"But I actually have an extra '58 V case that I bought, goodness knows why – but you don't see them, there's only a hundred of them, or less!

So, she would have sold the guitar for £500 – but she got significantly more than that! It got a little complicated, but in the end we got it done... it just took seven months. But you can live through three or four lifetimes and never see a korina guitar come out of a trashliner!"

So is it any good? "It's an extraordinary guitar, I'm going to beat the hell out of it! On the last tour I was playing it six songs a night – I was playing a Les Paul two songs a night..."

Joe's 1959 Les Paul known as 'Skinnerburst' features heavily on *BCCIV*

"The great thing about the High Power Tweed Twin is that every guitar you put through it, whether it's a Strat or a Les Paul or a 335, it sounds like that guitar"

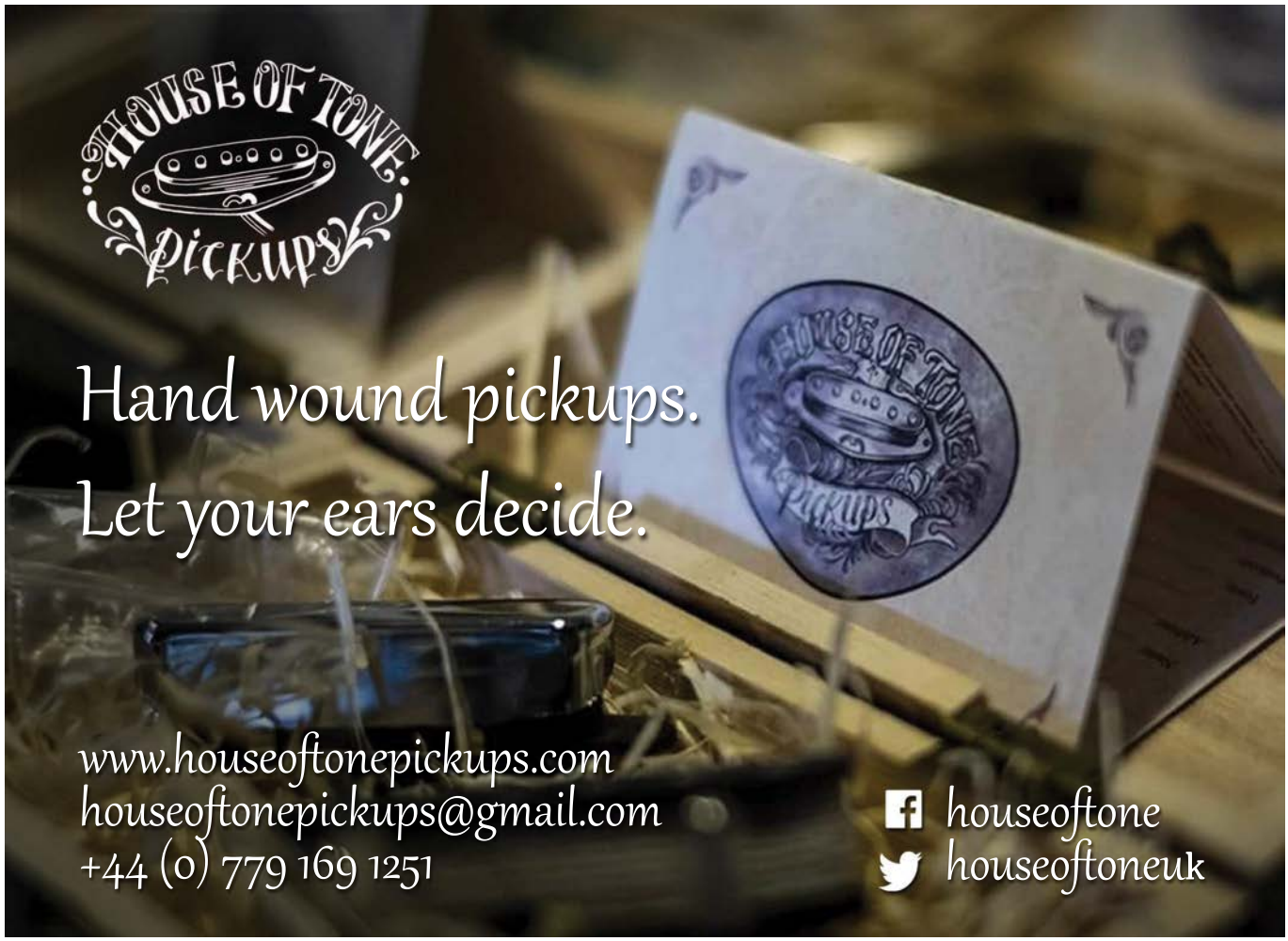
spec are matters of preference: instead of the alnico Jensen P12N drivers that were prone to blowing in the original models, the amp features a pair of slightly modified Celestion Classic Lead 80s – "Chinese or not, they are the perfect fit for the amplifier" – while the preamp has a 12AX7 in the first position rather than a 12AY7, so that it breaks up a little earlier.

"Plenty of people are making things with new-old-stock parts and saying, 'I used this, I used that,' – and that's okay," Joe remarks. "But at the end of the day, instead of making an Enzo Ferrari, let's make a Ford. Let's make a car you can drive every day, with modern parts, so that you can plug it in, crank it up and play it. And the great thing about this amp is that every guitar you put through it, whether it's a Strat or a Les Paul or a 335, it sounds like that guitar."

On the day that our conversation takes place, Joe has just taken delivery of the first two signature amps off the production line. For someone so immersed in the history of golden-era electric guitars and amplifiers, it's clearly a genuine thrill. He has also ensured that the whole package is personalised: "There's a sample settings card on the top of the amp that has one setting – my setting!"

So we've got the amp. And we know what his settings are. Now all we need in order to sound like Joe Bonamassa is a $200,000 Les Paul... and a hell of a lot of practice!

Black Country Communion's new album, *BCCIV*, is available now via Mascot. The band play Wolverhampton Civic Hall on 2 January 2018 and London Eventim Apollo on 4 January. Visit www.bccommunion.com for more information.



A choice of three H9 pedals to suit your needs and budget.

H9 Core
Pre-loaded with 25 presets from the H910 / H949 original studio harmonizers. Our most affordable H9.

H9
Pre-loaded with 9 effect algorithms and 99 presets. The 'Greatest Hits' version.

H9 Max
Pre-loaded with 47 algorithms and over 500 presets available. Also includes all future algorithm releases. For players that want it all!

One Pedal to Rule Them All

Every guitar pedal you'll ever need in one compact unit, the H9 Harmonizer® is full of Eventide's iconic studio-quality reverb, chorus, delay, modulation and pitch-shifting effects. A simple, one-knob user interface allows easy effect editing and preset selection while two onboard footswitches let you change presets, tap tempo, and bypass during live performance. There's real-time MIDI control and inputs for an expression pedal and AUX footswitch, and a free H9 Control app lets you create set lists, edit and manage presets wirelessly via Bluetooth.

Find out more at **eventideaudio.com**

Eventide®

SOURCE

Exclusively distributed in the UK & Ireland by Source • T: 020 8962 5080 • W: sourcedistribution.co.uk/eventide

facebook.com/sourcedistribution twitter.com/sourcedist

A Hit IS A Hit

Steven Van Zandt has worn many hats over the years – songwriter, producer, activist, band leader, radio host, fictional mafioso and of course, rhythm guitarist and co-conspirator with Bruce Springsteen. He's somehow also found time to be a prolific solo artist, and has returned with a new album, *Soulfire*. What better excuse for us to chat about this thing of his...

Story **Teri Saccone** Photography **Eleanor Jane**

Steven Van Zandt can rightly claim to be something of a Renaissance Man – he's certainly had enough ridiculously cool career moves to justify the tag. This is a man who not only backs up Bruce Springsteen every night as part of the E Street Band, but also played straight-talking mafia consigliere Silvio Dante in one of the greatest TV shows ever made, *The Sopranos*. As if that wasn't enough, he's also a producer with a little record called *Born In The USA* on his CV, has an internationally successful radio show, *Little Steven's Underground Garage*, and has over 30 years of influential political activism under his belt, too.

Music is still at his core however, and we caught up with Little Steven on tour for his latest solo record, *Soulfire*, which he's created with the aid of 15-piece band, The Disciples Of Soul. You have to admire someone who keeps his creative juices flowing after all these years, and when we sat down with him on a rare afternoon off in Pistoia, Italy, his youthful exuberance and piratical swagger (aided by his trademark headscarves) pours forth. From TV directing to record producing and everything in between, he's happy for us to pick his brains about a life of risk-taking that has seen him plunge fearlessly into so many disparate endeavours...

The Happy Wanderer

It's hard not to feel like Van Zandt has the golden touch – pretty much everything he devotes himself to pans out rather well, and it's an observation the 66-year-old clearly enjoys. "I wish I did more!" he laughs cheekily. "I try to keep the standards up for the things I actually do."

Case in point is his most recent on-screen excursion, the Netflix-funded fish-out-of-water mob comedy *Lilyhammer*, which sees Van Zandt star, write and direct, as well as scoring virtually all the music.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

When it comes to gear, not a lot has changed in Van Zandt's rig since the early days of the E Street Band. That is, after The Boss decided to muscle in on his guitar action...

"I use whatever works," Steven shrugs. "I use the same three or four pedals I used back in the day: a fuzz pedal, a Leslie, a delay. That's pretty much it. As for guitars, I went for a Strat early on. I started off on a Tele because Beck and Bloomfield were among my early heroes. Then they switched to Les Pauls, which I didn't follow. At that point your guitar was your identity. And back then I was the local Tele guy.

"Then at one point Bruce wanted to switch to a Tele, and he asked my permission. I said 'Yeah, go ahead'. Then, I switched to a Strat, which I found more versatile. So I used the occasional delay and fuzz tone. In the past I used the Octavio pedal that was made for Hendrix. I don't really use much of anything invented after 1966!"

"It was a joy to do and I had a great time," he affirms, before trying to decide which of his many hats he cherishes most. "I loved directing and hope to do more of that. The directing is closest to my experience as a producer, so that is most compelling to me now. But songwriting has a special place in my heart as well. Then being on stage is great because it's so physical. My natural inclination is to be behind the scenes – although admittedly, being in the spotlight is fun, too."

Playing Silvio Dante for eight years not only established Steven's credentials as a fine actor, but also catapulted his fame to unexpected heights – it was a curious twist of fate, and one that comes with its own challenges and opportunities.

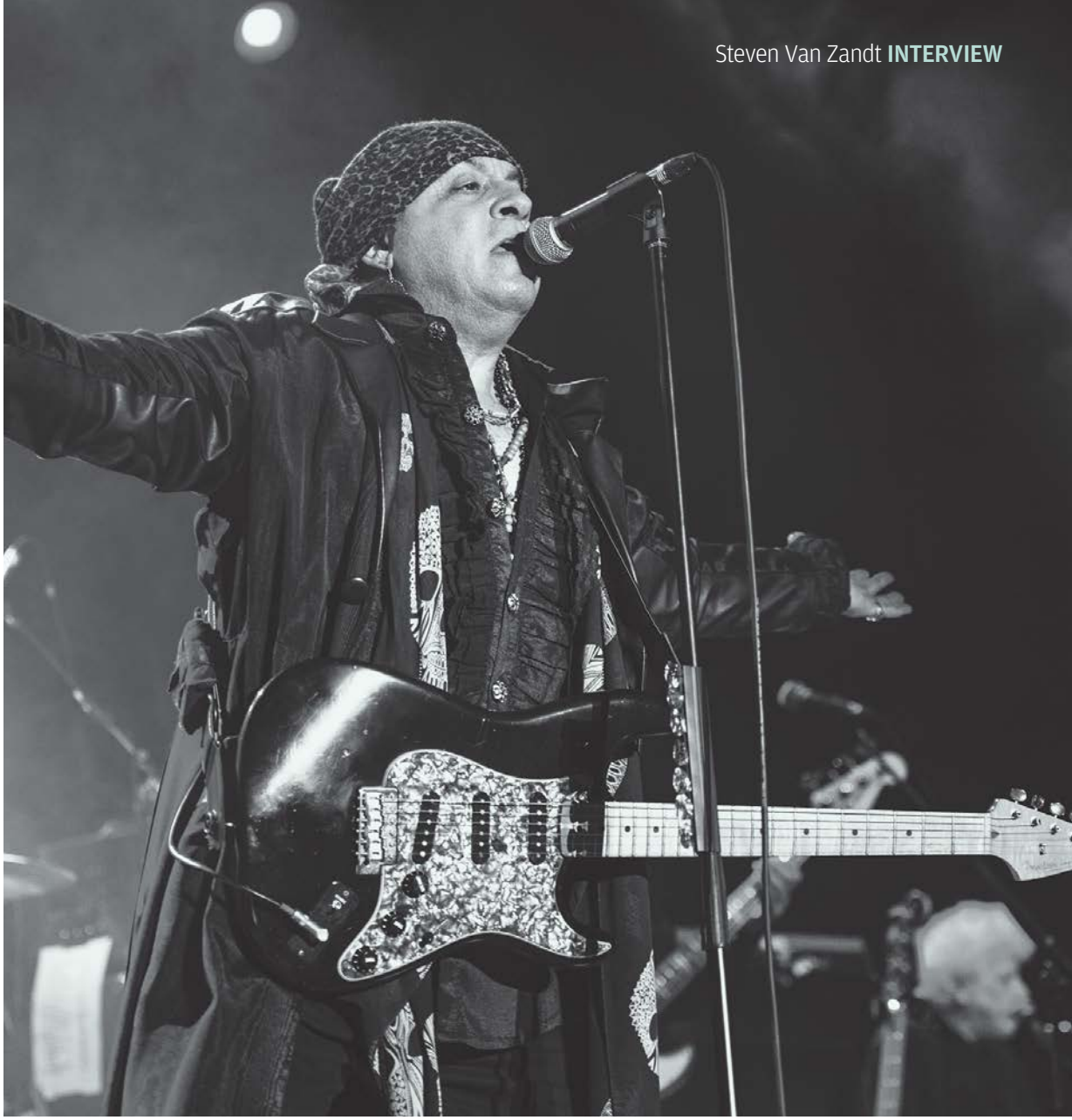
"What a great privilege that was," he enthuses. "The celebrity aspect can be a pain in the ass. But then it helps make things happen. The higher my celebrity capital is, the easier it is to get a project done."

Made In America

Clearly, Steven has never allowed himself to be pigeonholed, and has never been shy about speaking his mind either – for over 30 years he's embraced political activism, most notably co-founding the Artists United Against Apartheid movement in 1985. Van Zandt assembled a stellar cast of music stars, from Bob Dylan and Bono to Run DMC and Ringo Starr, to record *Sun City* – a self-penned protest song that played a big part in raising awareness of the political situation in South Africa both in American and across the globe.

"That is probably the most important accomplishment of my life," Van Zandt exclaims. "It was a culmination of the promise held by 60s protest music beginning with Dylan then later via Neil Young's *Ohio*. They inspired me to write that. So yeah, I guess it helped bring down a government. By being so extreme at the time, this was how I politicised my friends and the music industry at large. Tom Morello is one of the people who told me that really inspired him."

If *Sun City*'s message was hyper-focussed on its time, another of Steven's songs, *I Am A Patriot*, continues to resonate with audiences nearly 30 years after it was written. And the current political situation in the USA has given it fresh relevance.



"People are really responding to that song, especially on this tour because it's not about which political side you're on," he explains. "Enough with the whole football teams aspect of US politics. Now things are far more divided than ever. It's gotten to a low, dark point that I hope in the next few years we climb our way out of. The upward trajectory after WWII was good in many ways. But a long time ago we veered far off that path.

"What happened in the 60s was the fragmentation of society. The generation gap was quite staggering. It was the reawakening of consciousness and the birth of mass media which perpetuated so much change. And there was a sense of subversiveness back then. People realised the government was not always right and we wanted an end to wars. But the divide has never been reconciled, especially today. We realised then the USA was not the hero country we were told to believe it was."

Cold Cuts

Van Zandt's enduring kinship with Bruce Springsteen began in the 1960s on the fabled New Jersey Shore, but at first, Little Steven was a bigger name in the local music scene when the two began writing together as a survival mechanism.

> "Springsteen and I were complete freaks, misfits and that's why we fit in with music. We had no other good options"

"Bruce and I were complete freaks, misfits and that's why we fit in with music. We had no other good options," Van Zandt explains. "I was a bandleader, songwriter and arranger at that time, so when I decided to join his band it was big news in Jersey, because I was well known there. When I started calling him 'The Boss' people started paying attention."

It's a musical relationship that has been hugely fruitful, and still endures over 50 years later, with the pair still working together in the studio today.

"I offer him lots of suggestions. Some he uses, others he doesn't. He goes through changes and his accomplishments have been truly profound. But we've both always strived for new ways of doing things. For example, as co-producer of *The River* [Springsteen's first No 1 album] it was a wonderful satisfaction that we figured out how to get the band successfully recorded. Which made *Born In The USA* a lot easier to make."

Capturing the vibrant sound of Bruce's famous band wasn't easy, however, and it involved Steven ripping up a lot of the received studio wisdom of the time...

"I realised every record of the 60s sounded great and the records of the 70s sucked," he chuckles. "I thought this was odd. "Then I learned it was because studio techniques changed. They started padding the rooms, close-mic'ing everything. Jimmy Page is genius and the only exception to that decade. As a producer he had the ears to take great risks and stick Bonzo in the stairwell. And that went against conventional wisdom of that time.

MUSIC
BANK

"Plus the engineers took over with their obsessions with clarity and separation. Engineers think mechanically because that's their job, as opposed to producers who see the overarching picture. In the 50s and 60s they mostly used only one fucking mic for the whole room. So we pulled down all the padded walls and ripped up the rugs – making the studio a very 'live' room. Plus we got great drum sounds. We did use some individual mics here and there. But not many."

Irregular Around The Margins

Perhaps unsurprisingly for someone with such affinity for the sounds of the 1960s, Van Zandt likes to keep things as analogue as possible when it comes to recording.

"Most new music does not really speak to me, it's like a different language," he admits. "With *Soulfire*, I basically started off totally old-school, as my studio has two-inch tape, the boards – everything all-analogue. Then you have to compromise to the modern world a bit so we mix digitally. But this sounds different to me versus doing both digitally. I like the sound of things hitting tape, the inaccuracies of that. I like the way the frequencies explode rather than staying within their own boxes digitally. There is a kind of sonic integration that takes place within the studio process. Of course there is some leakage there. Then you rely on digital to clean it."

Over his long career, Steven has dipped his toes into rock, blues, funk, soul and even world music, but *Soulfire* gave him a chance to affirm his musical identity.

"I thought: 'Who am I artistically?'" he notes. "I'm not very consistent stylistically, And the sound most identified with me is that soul-meets-rock thing. So I went back to that. This record has variety, yet it is not schizophrenic."

Long Term Parking

It's been nearly two decades since Steven's last solo record, 1999's *Born Again Savage*, and the music industry has obviously changed dramatically in that time – but it's not something that bothers him too much.

"I never sold many records so it's business as usual," he dryly observes. "With my projects I focus exclusively on the artistic side. So I made this record by myself in my studio and I paid for it myself. No one wanted to sign me or (legendary singer) Darlene Love, but I worked with her because I consider her the greatest singer alive, so I also produced her debut album at the age of 73. So I brought my A-game to that. It was some of my best arrangements and production. I wanted *Soulfire* to be at least as good as that, because my philosophy is to always match at the very least the quality of your last project. I wrote the gospel song for her, *Jesus Is My Rock That Keeps Me Rollin'*, and *Among The Believers* was an old song of mine."

If those titles suggest a spiritual dimension to Van Zandt's writing, he's keen not to overplay that side of his work.

"Not consciously," he affirms. "I studied all the religions because I found them fascinating. I did tours where every day in a new city I'd visit a Catholic church because Catholicism is the ultimate theatre when it comes to religion. I do believe in a common sense spirituality: a connection deep inside everyone. But I don't dwell on it."

All Due Respect

Van Zandt is one of the most respected sidemen is the business, but technical prowess isn't something he often gets credit for. Once, that might have bothered him, but he long ago realised that it wasn't what he was destined to be.

"I did yearn for that guitar hero thing in the early days because of the era I came up in," he admits. "I learned to do a solo with a certain competency, yet it was always about serving the song. Those 10-minute solos got boring. I didn't feel that was my thing."

"I love 60s pop, which is my favourite era of all time, because you still had the two-minute song configuration, yet these amazing guitarists, too. So, Beck's 15-second incredibly cool solo in the middle of essentially a pop song. For me that was the ultimate. Plus I love Clapton's playing on those Cream songs. Jimmy's work on the Yardbirds' *Little Games*, and his session work, were also great."

As for the future, Steven's plan is to continue to create, to do new things that interest him, and seek out new experiences across his varied scope of interests.

"Time is always a factor, and I've got to love it," he explains. "Plus I want to learn something new if possible. I like to jump into a new gig and learn on the job as I did with *The Sopranos*. Producing-wise I like challenging myself by walking into a room and making artistic judgements right there. I'll often do the arrangements on the spot. I get a feeling when I walk into room from the players. It's become a habit for me to live in the moment, as we do as actors, and to be fully alive in this moment. It translates to real life. No past, no future, just now. That's what I focus on. My mind absorbs and integrates constantly so I like learning new things.

"I want to tour this record as long as I can, then see what Bruce is planning for 2018. But I hope to get another TV show going. So every summer I'd like to be on tour with the Disciples or Bruce then shooting a TV show during the winters. That's my vision."

The Strong, Silent Type

As our time comes to a close, room service appears bringing espressos and a light snack, and for the first time Little Steven briefly channels the spirit of Silvio Dante...

"Maybe I'm a little prejudiced, being Italian-American," he deadpans. "But the Italians are the best at so many things..." We wonder then if, given his Renaissance Man reputation, he might consider popping down to Rome and giving the Sistine Chapel ceiling a touch up? Without missing a beat he replies, "I'll see what I can do..."

Little Steven's latest album, *Soulfire*, is out now on Big Machine

BANKERS
DON'T FEATURE ON
BEDROOM WALLS.
THE POWER OF MUSIC!

th•mann
MUSIC IS OUR PASSION

Talking Shop

PINE TUNING

From teenage bass player, to guitar repairer, to esteemed guitar builder and designer, the latest chapter in Dennis Fano's story takes place in Nashville, Tennessee...

Story **Chris Vinnicombe** Photography **Joe Supple**

When Dennis Fano left Fano Guitars in 2015 due to musical differences with the company's management, it wasn't without risk. He'd made a name for himself, and Fano's Alt De Facto series models such as the RB6 Thinline and GF6 remain some of our favourite electric guitar designs of recent times.

Happily, it was only a matter of months before his new instruments began to emerge under the banner of Novo Guitars. Our first encounter with a Novo was revelatory: light weight, remarkably resonant a neck that felt like a work of art and expressive, almost hypnotic amplified tones. The Serus T ended up scooping not just a 10/10 review but also winning the 'Best Guitar Over £1,000' category in our 2016 Gear Of The Year awards. Not a bad start to a new venture.

Back in July 2017 while in Nashville for the Summer NAMM Show, we headed out towards the airport on the east side of town to meet with Dennis and the rest of the Novo team at the company's new facility. Having moved the operation down from Pennsylvania only a few weeks earlier, they were still unboxing machines and finding their feet somewhat, but there was still a fine selection of custom and shop-ordered Novos for us to swoon over, along with some Rivoltas – the highly-affordable fruits of Dennis' ongoing collaboration with Eastwood Guitars. Once we managed to drag ourselves away from the instruments, we sat down with Dennis and got the full story.

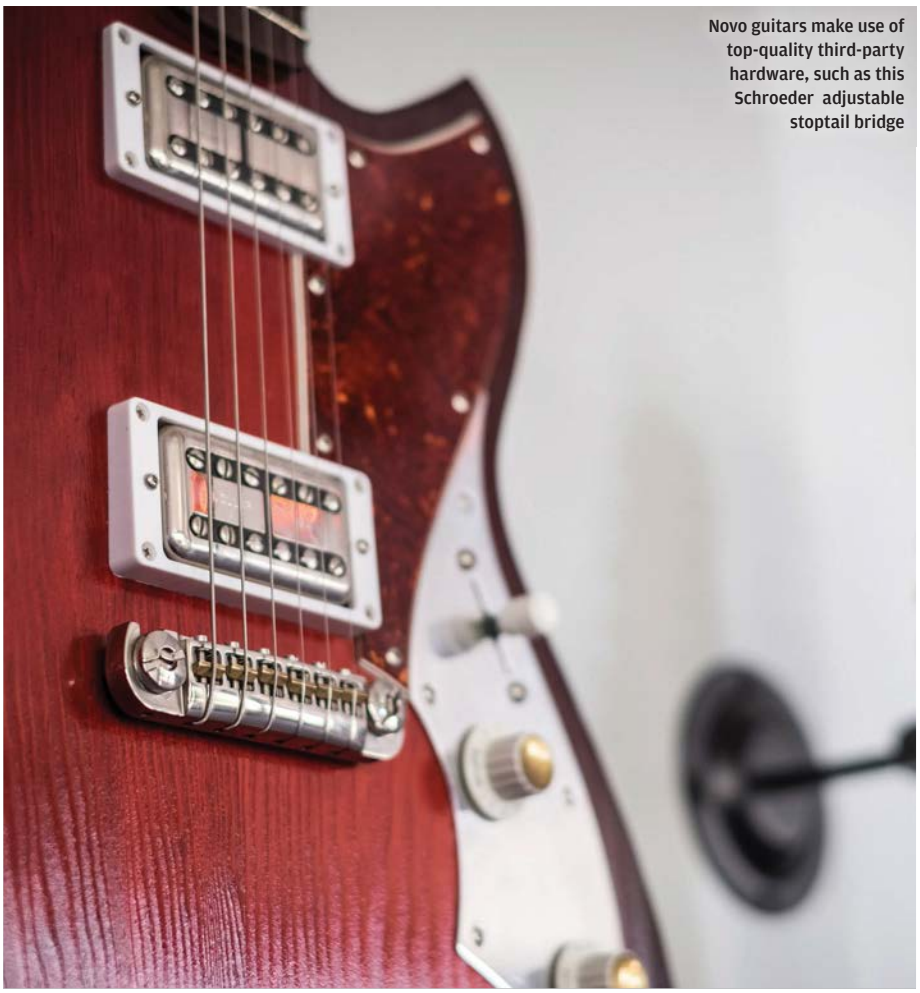
"I wanted to kind of veer far away from the Alt De Factos... I just didn't want there to be a feeling that it was the only thing I was capable of doing"

Did you start building the first Novo models at home?

"When I was coming out of the last phase [of working with Fano Guitars] and deciding what I wanted to do, it was kind of a long process figuring out the next step. The initial thing that I did was the Sectis model, 'cause I wanted to kind of veer far away from the Alt De Factos – kind of a 180. I just didn't want there to be any kind of feeling that it was the only thing I was capable of doing. It wasn't long before I realised that the Serus models were really what my customers were looking for from me.

"That one body shape that we're using for the Sectis and the Serus was the first thing to come out – I was just building prototypes in my home shop and I did that for about a year before I hired Matthew [Timmons] and Jack [Misiaszek] to come in. Matthew is GM so he's taken over the day-to-day operation,

Dennis Fano with one of the latest Serus T guitars to come out of the Novo Guitars workshop



Novo guitars make use of top-quality third-party hardware, such as this Schroeder adjustable stoptail bridge

A custom-order semi-hollow Serus J with eye-catching sparkle finish

allowing me to spend more time in the shop rather than answering the phone and emails and that sort of stuff, and Jack is doing assembly and a handful of other things, such as making pickguards."

What were Matthew and Jack's backgrounds prior to working with you?

"Matthew had worked at Lollar Pickups. He and his dad Greg worked there, and they had both spent time at Ernie Ball. And he was also working at Microsoft before he came here. He'd been a fan of my work for many years. Within a couple of hours we knew it was going to be a good match! Jack was working in the production shop for Premier Builders Guild, and I knew he was one of those guys that I was going to reach out to when I was ready to start something new. He did a lot of work on the Fanos that were coming out of the PBG workshop in California.

"Both these guys were willing to relocate from the West Coast; Matthew was in Seattle >

The super-thin nitro finishes allow the grain of the body woods to show through

The tempered nature of the maple neck contributes to its distinctive look

The Serus S adds a Strat-style vibrato and pickup layout to the Novo mix

and Jack was living on the central Californian coast. They both took a big leap of faith and wanted to be a part of what we are doing here. Devon [Booth, operations manager] came to us just prior to us leaving Pennsylvania – he and Matthew have been good friends since childhood. And then we just last week hired somebody to work in the woodshop doing some sanding for us. So we're currently a five-person team here in the shop. Another friend of mine from up north, Andrew, is doing social media for us and working on our website.

"When we were in Pennsylvania, we were hitting about 12 guitars a month with Jack and I being the only ones with hands on guitars. Now, with the move, we'd like to be in the ballpark of 30 to 40 guitars. We'd like to see a slow, steady growth rather than running before we're crawling here in Nashville. We have some inventory that we brought with us, but in the next few months we'll be firing up all the machines..."

"When I started Novo Guitars, I already knew that was one of the first things that I wanted to do, to start experimenting with new materials"

The Novo instruments we've played have been remarkably light and resonant. When did you decide to start using material from Tempered Tonewoods?

"Well initially, Hans at Tempered Tonewoods (temperedtonewoods.com) reached out to me – I think that we'd met at one of the NAMM shows a few years back – to get me to try some of the stuff out. I was still with the old company at that point; I'd brought it up and there didn't seem to be much interest from those guys. But I was interested in the process and what they were able to do with the material. When I started [Novo Guitars], I already knew that was one of the first things that I wanted to do, to start experimenting with new materials. The first blanks that they had sent to me to work with... they sent me some pine, they sent me some butternut, tempered basswood, tempered alder... I settled on the pine. I just loved everything about it. Super-resonant, light weight, I loved the texture of the wood.

"I'd say about 90 per cent of the guitars we're making, we're using tempered pine for the bodies, which is a material that not too many other builders have started to work or experiment with. The material that we are using is reclaimed and it comes from >

Honeyboy AMPS

Get glorious retro guitar tone through a beautifully handcrafted amplifier

www.honeyboyamps.com

"Fabulous – reminds me of vintage 40s Gibson amps in terms of quality of tone. I always look forward to playing through it."
Chris Corcoran

Classic vintage circuits, hand-wired in our custom hardwood cabinets and finished in a stunning range of exotic vinyls and hardware

Is your Strat gig ready?

ALL STRATS HAVE THE BASIC INGREDIENTS TO BE TRULY GREAT. THE WUDTONE VINTAGE RELOAD PROVIDES THE RIGHT HARDWARE & SET UP TO CREATE A TRULY CLASSIC STRAT SOUND WITH TOTAL TUNING STABILITY.

Guitar & Bass AWARD EXCELLENCE 10/10

"I have to say as a Vintage Strat guy, these guitars are exceptional. I was hoping the reload program would enable me to get the same sounds as my original 61 & 63 Strats have. I was so blown away by the first Strat, I ordered a second Candy Apple one!"

Mark Boughton, lead guitarist
Lorise Eton & the Stealers

"The difference in tone, length of note, and feel was unmistakeable. The bridge undoubtedly had more effect on the guitar than the new pickups"

Fitzy, The Maddie Jones Band

Wudtone
Guitar Innovation

TEL:01291 671515 | WWW.WUDTONE.COM

Novo has only recently moved to Nashville, so production there is just getting started

"We're keeping the finishes extremely thin. It makes it easier for us to wear... we can spray a guitar today and next week it already looks old"

multiple sources. We get some stuff which is super lightweight, and then we get stuff that's a little heavier than we'd ideally want to use. So we're trying to find ways to mix and match the heavier boards and lighter boards, and get just the right recipe, so that we wind up with a guitar that's not going to be more than seven or seven and a quarter pounds when it is done. To me, seven and a half is kind of the upper limit of where we want to be. Though I know that we could hit eight, or eight and a half and that would be acceptable to a lot of other people..."

Your necks not only look spectacular but the super-thin lacquer feels great, too. Can you tell us how the magic happens?

"With the tempered woods, the darker that maple gets, the more that figure starts to pop. We're keeping the finishes extremely thin. It makes it easier for us to wear through those finishes, it gives the guitar not only a broken-in feel, but an aesthetic. It looks like a finish that's sunken into the wood even though it's brand new. We can spray a guitar today and even next week it already looks like an old finish. We're literally putting about five or six passes of lacquer on the guitar.

"With the ripple and the texture that we're getting out of the pine bodies and the maple necks, it just shows through and just looks like a finish that's sunken into those timbers. It's not laying on top. It doesn't look like a showroom finish – we're not attempting to go for that. We want something very unique that only looks like a Novo. That's part of the recipe."

As well as everything that's going on with Novo, we understand that there's another Rivolta design on the way...

"I really wanted to do kind of an offshoot of what I was doing with the JM6 but bring in a little of that Firebird kind of flavour. So it's got a raised centre section, it kind of flares out at the bottom. It's kind of a cross between a JM6 or Jazzmaster and a Firebird, all those offsets that really appeal to me. Even with >

Most of Novo's guitars use tempered pine for the body

The workmanship and attention to detail is exemplary

UNLOCK YOUR CREATIVITY

THE ULTIMATE TOOL TO FIND YOUR SOUND

Download on the App Store · GET IT ON Google Play · Softube

CONNECT • CONTROL • CREATE

Marshall GATEWAY · Marshall CODE™ · MY.MARSHALL.COM

DIGITAL MODELLING AMPLIFIER SERIES

100 editable presets | Classic and contemporary Marshall tones | Control, share and stream your music

Series includes 100w head, 25/50/100w combos, 212/412 cabinets

Marshall CODE™

MARSHALLAMPS.COM/CODE

something like the Combinata, I couldn't just do something RB6-like, I needed to give it a little bit of an offset. I'm just a sucker for offsets! And all of the funky stuff such as the Teiscos and stuff like that, I've always had a soft spot for those guitars and I try to work those elements into anything that I'm doing and hopefully just do something a little bit new and a little different from what's been done before. That's really what I'm shooting for. To pay tribute to the stuff that I like but do something new and fresh that hopefully appeals to players."

What guitars do you have kicking around at home? It's easy to imagine a collection of weird and wonderful vintage curios!

"It's not like I have a collection of guitars. I usually have things for a very short time, more for research than anything else. I'll spend a little bit of time with them but I almost don't allow myself to bond with them for too long, because I know that I'm not really gonna be hanging onto them! My sole focus is building the guitars that I'm making here... the Novos, designing the Rivoltas.

"I would love at some point – when I can afford to! – to have a nice vintage collection, stuff that I can hang on to and not have to turn around and move for something else. But I'm more of a bass player than a guitar player. At least I was when I was in my teens and in bands, I was always playing bass. And the first instruments I built were basses. So I eventually got into guitars when I started doing repair work, and when I started making guitars it was kind of strange for me because I'd only made basses for the first few years. I've come a long way!"

Does that mean you are thinking about launching a Novo bass?

"We will. I've already got some renderings, some ideas of what I want to do using the Serus body style and kind of bringing in some of the elements of what I've done in the past with the PX4 and the GF4. So there will be a few basses. I'd love to do some baritones as well. It's been on my list of things to do for a long time and I'm hoping that with this move, bringing in more help, it will afford me the time to start doing some more design work.

"There's so much for us to still get into. I've got what I think is a cool single-cut version of the Serus design – it's a slightly smaller body but an offset single-cut which we want to do in both a traditional carve-top like a Les Paul but also a slab body, all-mahogany with a dog-ear and a wrapover bridge... there's so many things that I want to do!"

Novo Guitars are available in the UK via Coda Music (coda-music.com). Visit youtube.com/theguitarmagazine for a video tour of the new Novo Guitars facility in Nashville and novoguitars.com for more

Novo offers a wide range of high-end pickup options, including Amalfitano, Fralin, Lollar, Novak, ThroBak and TV Jones

Many of Novo's guitars use Kluson tuners, but Sperzel locking units are also an option

Artist: Jannik Brunke - YT/JannikBMusic - @JannikBrunke

FAITH GUITARS

‘THE UK’S BEST ACOUSTIC GUITAR’

2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016

SUBSCRIPTION FORM XDPS17

Please select the magazine(s) of your choice and your preferred method of payment

FOOD HEAVEN
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£20.95** SAVE 30%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£41.90** SAVE 30%

CAKE DECORATING HEAVEN
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£20.95** SAVE 30%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£20.95** SAVE 30%

BAKING HEAVEN
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£20.95** SAVE 30%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£20.95** SAVE 30%

CLASSIC POP
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£23.35** SAVE 35%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£46.70** SAVE 35%

GLUTEN-FREE HEAVEN
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£19.45** SAVE 35%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£19.45** SAVE 35%

FREE-FROM HEAVEN
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£19.45** SAVE 35%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£19.45** SAVE 35%

FREE-FROM HEAVEN & GLUTEN FREE HEAVEN
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£17.95** SAVE 40%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£35.90** SAVE 40%

ITALIA!
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£15** SAVE 45%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£30** SAVE 45%

VINTAGE ROCK
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£23.35** SAVE 35%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£23.35** SAVE 35%

THE GUITAR MAGAZINE
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£16.45** SAVE 45%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£32.90** SAVE 45%

MUSICTECH
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£17.95** SAVE 50%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£35.95** SAVE 40%

COUNTRY MUSIC
☐ Annual UK Direct Debit **£21.55** SAVE 40%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£21.55** SAVE 40%

VEGAN FOOD & LIVING
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£17.95** SAVE 40%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£35.90** SAVE 40%

LONG LIVE VINYL
☐ UK Direct Debit every 6 months **£25.15** SAVE 40%
☐ 1 year UK Credit/Debit Card/Cheque **£50.30** SAVE 40%

YOUR DETAILS

Title Forename Surname

Email address**

Address

Postcode

Daytime tel

Mobile**

GIFT RECIPIENT DETAILS *(If appropriate)*

Title Forename Surname

Address

Postcode

Daytime tel

Send your completed form to **FREEPOST ANTHEM PUBLISHING**
Yes! It's that simple! No stamp required. UK only.

**Please enter this information so that Anthem Publishing Ltd can keep you informed about your subscription. You may unsubscribe from these messages at any time.

Anthem Publishing would like to keep you up to date with news, events, and special offers, and occasionally request feedback from you. Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate how you would like to be contacted. You can choose more than one.

Email ☐ Post ☐ Telephone ☐ SMS ☐ No thanks ☐

For Direct Debit orders please complete the form below

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY DIRECT DEBIT

DIRECT Debit

Originator's Identification Number
8 3 7 1 8 1

1 Name of your Bank or Building Society

2 Name of account holder(s)

3 Branch sort code ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

4 Account number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

5 Instruction to your Bank/Building Society Please pay Anthem Publishing Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Anthem Publishing and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s) Date

For credit/debit cards please complete the details below:

☐ Please debit the following amount from my debit/credit card: £

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Maestro ☐ American Express

Card no ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Valid from ☐☐ ☐☐ Expiry date ☐☐ ☐☐ Issue no ☐☐

Signature(s) Date

☐ **I enclose a cheque made payable to Anthem Publishing Ltd for £**

Code **XDPS17**. Offer ends **31 December 2017**.

*Prices listed on the covers are available to UK customers paying by Direct Debit only. Subscriptions will start from the issue on sale in January unless otherwise requested.

CAKE DECORATING HEAVEN FROM £20.95
SAVE 30%

BAKING HEAVEN FROM £20.95
SAVE 30%

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- ✓ **Save up to 50%***
- ✓ **Spread the cost by convenient Direct Debit***
- ✓ **A magazine subscription is a gift that lasts all year**
- ✓ **FREE gift card to give on Christmas Day**
- ✓ **Every issue delivered direct to their door**

SAVE UP TO 50% ON THE SHOP PRICE

3 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

Special Christmas subscription offer!

Christmas gift subscriptions from just £15*

FREE-FROM HEAVEN
FROM £19.45
SAVE 35%

GLUTEN-FREE HEAVEN
FROM £19.45
SAVE 35%

ITALIA!
FROM £15
SAVE 45%

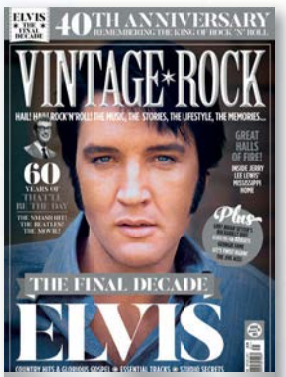
VEGAN FOOD & LIVING
FROM £17.95
SAVE 45%

LONG LIVE VINYL
FROM £25.15
SAVE 40%

THE GUITAR MAGAZINE
FROM £16.45
SAVE 45%

MUSICTECH
FROM £17.95
SAVE 50%

CLASSIC POP
FROM £23.35
SAVE 35%



VINTAGE ROCK
FROM £23.35
SAVE 35%

COUNTRY MUSIC
FROM £21.55
SAVE 40%

PLUS! Overseas customers can save up to 50%
visit shop.anthem-publishing.com/christmas

shop.anthem-publishing.com
USE CODE XDPS17
USA go to imsnews.com/anthemxmas17

+44 (0)1371 853 609
QUOTE CODE XDPS17

COMPLETE THE ORDER FORM AND SEND FREEPOST
UK Only

FRANK BROTHERS SIGNATURE MODEL

Quirky vintage and modern boutique influences have coalesced into a new design that's a potential world-beater. **CHRIS VINNICOMBE** plugs in...

Based in Toronto's 'Studio District', the brothers Frank comprise luthier twins Tim and Nick along with older sibling and managing partner, Jon. The influences of a concert violinist grandfather and award-winning record producer dad reverberate in the current generation's approach to guitar-making – the Frank Brothers Guitar Company only manufactures one model, but it does so with exceptional focus and attention to detail.

Although the Signature Model's contemporary-vintage aesthetic has notes of Kay, Harmony and Airline, the build quality and playing experience are about as far removed from the world of catalogue guitars as it's possible to get. Despite its angular silhouette, the subtly arched body has the elegant precision and clean lines of a fine modern acoustic, and this certainly isn't achieved by doing things the easy way. The bigleaf curly maple front and back are cut from the same billet, bookmatched and then press-laminated to an arched, chambered mahogany core that tapers in thickness at the edge.

The body has the elegant precision of a fine acoustic, and this isn't achieved by doing things the easy way

The set neck is hewn from quartersawn mahogany and features a quartersawn Macassar ebony fingerboard with a Gibson-like 12-inch radius and 22 Jescar 51108 18 per cent nickel-silver frets, whose 0.108 x 0.051-inch dimensions just about creep into jumbo territory. Unlike a Gibson, the frets are installed over the fingerboard binding to maximise the playing area and avoid the chance of the outer strings sticking between fret end and nib.

A pin-sharp build definitely doesn't have to make for a soulless feel; the neck has a comfortable, soft-shouldered 'D' profile with a slight

CODAMUSIC

www.coda-music.com

Gibson

Massive selection of Memphis, Custom, True Historic & the 2017 USA models always in stock.

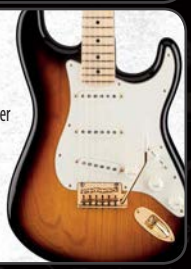
Echopark GUITARS

With an artist roster including Joe Perry, Josh Homme & Troy Van Leeuwen - these guitars mean business! Coda Music are excited to be the first and only UK dealer to stock these stunning guitars! New delivery due soon, including Model J, 59 and La Carne.

Rivolta GUITARS BY DENNIS FANO

Acclaimed guitar designer and builder Dennis Fano of Novo Guitars and the highly innovative Eastwood Guitars are excited to announce the launch of Rivolta Guitars. First delivery now in store.

Fender



We always carry a great selection Fender & Squier guitars, basses & amps. Amazing selection of American Standard Series guitars & basses in stock. It's been 60 years since Fender introduced the Stratocaster. Full range of 60th Anniversary guitars now in stock. Prices start from £364

Acoustic Guitars

Our new acoustic centre in Stevenage old town is open for business. This new showroom is home to an enormous choice of exquisite acoustic instruments from Bedell, Collings, Gibson, Gretsch, Lowden, Martin, National, Taylor, Yamaha, Epiphone and many many more!!!

BILT GUITARS

Coda Music is proud to present BILT Guitars...the ingenious creations of messers Bill Henss & Tim Thelen! Having built guitars for artist like Nels Cline, Lee Ranaldo, Brent Hinds, Dave Keuning & Wayne Sermon of Imagine Dragons these guys from Des Moines are starting to make serious waves in the guitar building world!!

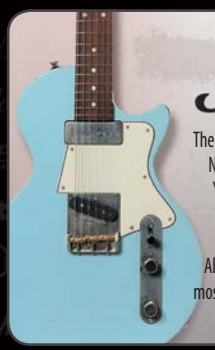
Great selection of Two Rock amps always in stock, & the new TS1 & Burnside heads are due soon.

Two-Rock

BadCat

Full range of Bad Cat amps in stock. Prices start at only £649

fano guitars



The only place in the UK to see Fano guitars. New Fano Standard models now arriving. You could say the Fano Standard series is Fano's "greatest hits" collection. After studying their order history of custom Alt de Facto guitar line they combined the most popular requests of features & options into a new line of ready-to-play guitars.

We are delighted to be stocking Morgan amps and effects. First delivery now in.

MORGAN AMPLIFICATION

No nonsense straight forward Voxy/Plexy/ Tweedy toned amplifiers designed by Adam Grimm and built in San Diego California. Heads and combos due soon.

Satellite AMPLIFIERS

100's of secondhand guitars, amps & pedals in stock, see www.coda-music.com for an up to date list.

We buy secondhand guitars - bring yours in for a quote & try something new at the same time

Novo GUITARS BY DENNIS FANO

Coda Music are proud & delighted to be dealers of these fine instruments. Visit us instore to try one today.

Famous for the stunning and, quite frankly, game-changing Alt De Facto line of guitars, Dennis has become one of the most respected master luthiers and guitar designers of modern times. Dennis has been working on a new vision for the modern electric guitar...ladies and gentlemen i give you...Novo Guitars!!!

Fender CUSTOM SHOP

WHEN YOU'RE READY A Custom Shop guitar embodies everything Fender has learned over 60 years of building the world's most revered electric solidbodies. The finest materials, all the right details, hand built in Corona, California – it's the guitar of your dreams, realised.

WE HAVE THE GUITAR FOR YOU Coda Music is Europe's biggest and best Fender Custom Shop dealer, so whether you want a perfect New Old Stock, vintage-correct model, or the heaviest of Heavy Relics with a raft of custom playability tweaks, you'll find it here and with over 100 in stock in one store you won't find a better selection anywhere.

UNIQUE TO US, UNIQUE TO YOU Our extensive in-store stock includes many custom ordered guitars, built to our own exacting specs after years of buying, selling and playing these fabulous instruments.

CAN WE BUILD IT? Yes we can! If you have that extra special something in mind, we can work with you to make it a reality. Custom orders can be ready in a matter of months and cost less than you might think – call us, email us or drop in to discuss your perfect combination of features.

CARR

Great selection of models and finishes, Europe's number one Carr amp dealer. Carr Lincoln now in stock, prices start at £1999.

Great selection of John Page Classic guitars in stock, from the original Ashburn Classic, the Ashburn Classic HH & new for 2017 the Ash bodied Ashburn & AJ are due soon

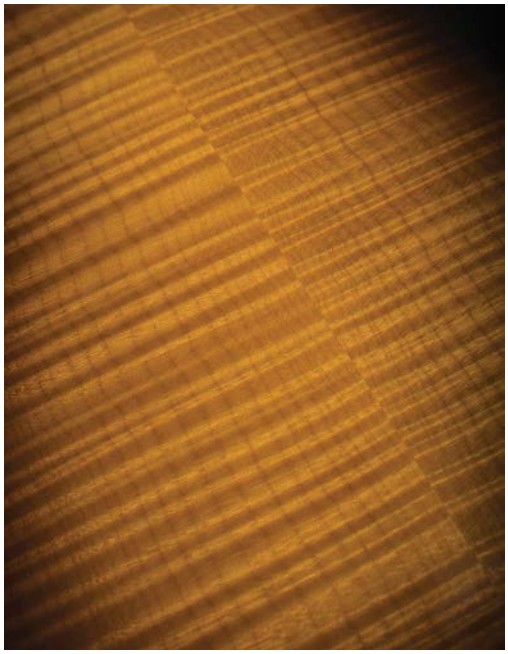
Effects

Coda Music bring you the finest guitar effects pedals money can buy!...ready for you to demo with a your choice of amplifier and guitar!!!

Our pedal range includes the usual suspects such as Boss, Electro Harmonix, Ibanez, Jim Dunlop, Joyo, Line 6, Mesa Boogie, Mooer, MXR, Strymon, T-Rex, TC Electronic, Visual Sound, Voodoo Lab, Wampler, Way Huge, Xotic.....we also have a huge selection of the less ordinary suspects like Bad Cat, Death By Audio, Earthquaker Devices, EWS, Faifield Electronic, Free The Tone, Fulltone Custom Shop, Jetter Gear, Keeley, Mad Professor, Providence, Rothwell and Sonic Edge!!!

51a High Street, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3AH t: 01438 350 815 e: stevenage@coda-music.co.uk
Acoustic Centre 27b Church Lane, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3QW t: 01438 350815 e: acoustics@coda-music.com

Instant decision 9 months 0% finance
available on all new products over £300 on our website



hint of 'V' and it benefits from roomy 'board dimensions and easy upper-fret access. The Signature Model's scale length is a best-of-both-worlds 25 inches, while its headstock possesses a similarly refined air to the rest of the instrument.

The bookmatched Macassar ebony headstock overlay echoes the symmetry of the body's maple front and back, and even the typography on the mother-of-pearl logo inlay is clean, stylish and contemporary. A diamond neck volute ensures that the headstock's 15-degree back angle isn't a structural weakness, while six open-gear Waverly tuners complete a picture that draws from several different eras of luthiery, but manages to establish a fresh identity all of its own.

Plugged into a Fender-style circuit with just a touch of reverb it's an almost ludicrously expressive combo

Classic Light Sunburst, Classic Dark Sunburst, Trans Red and Walnut are 'standard' finishes (£4,500) but the Cremona Burst seen here is available for an upcharge. The finish has a super-thin nitrocellulose top coat for a vintage-style feel, and the combination of the sunburst and the three-dimensional figure of the maple on this example is utterly mesmerising.

A variety of other options can be custom-ordered but very little about the Signature is off-the-peg. The trapeze tailpiece is an in-house design, and similar levels of thought and care have been extended to the plastics, which are also made in the Frank Brothers workshop: the undersides of the hexagonal pickup surrounds are machined to match the arch of the top, and also taper to match the neck angle, ensuring the pickups are parallel with the strings.

Removing the 'broken heart' pickguard (like the pickup rings, this is secured by slot head screws in brass bushings) reveals a window in

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The **B&G Little Sister Private Build** (**from £3,750**) is another innovative blend of classic influences. It's available in non-cutaway and single cutaway versions with P-90 or humbucking pickups. The **Gibson Memphis ES-339** (**£2,299**) is a more compact version of the ES-335 ideal for those who find the size of the original design unwieldy but still crave classic thinline tones and performance. The **Gibson Custom CS-336** (**£3,599**) features a back, sides and centre-block carved from a single piece of mahogany and a two-piece maple top

KEY FEATURES

- **PRICE** £4,750
- **DESCRIPTION** Double-cutaway electric guitar. Made in Canada
- **BUILD** Bookmatched bigleaf curly maple front and back, chambered mahogany core, polished bone strap buttons, quartersawn mahogany set neck with bound quartersawn Macassar ebony 12-inch radius fingerboard, 22 Jescar 51108 jumbo frets, bookmatched Macassar ebony headstock overlay, bone nut
- **HARDWARE** Zinc ABR-1 bridge, Frank Brothers custom floating tailpiece, Waverly open-gear tuners
- **ELECTRICS** 2x Lollar Low Wind Imperial humbucking pickups, master volume, master tone, 3-way toggle pickup selector switch
- **SCALE LENGTH** 25"/635mm
- **NECK WIDTH** 43.3mm at nut, 52.6mm at 12th fret
- **NECK DEPTH** 22.1mm at first fret, 24.0mm at 12th fret
- **STRING SPACING** 36.7mm at nut, 53.4mm at bridge
- **WEIGHT** 7.52lb/3.41kg
- **FINISH** Cremona Sunburst
- **OPTIONS** See website for a variety of custom options
- **CONTACT** The North American Guitar 0207 835 5597
  thenorthamericanguitar.com
  www.frankbrothersguitars.com

the top via which you can gain access to the wiring loom, which includes Emerson Pro CTS 500k master volume and tone pots and a paper-in-oil tone capacitor. The Lollar 'buckers fitted to our review guitar are Low Wind Imperials. These units deliver a little more grunt than the Lollar El Rayo pickups that come as standard but are still very much on the vintage end of the humbucker spectrum at 7.0k (neck) and 7.9k (bridge).

We'd perhaps prefer control knobs with a chunkier feel but when it comes to negatives, it's really a case of clutching at straws, such is the near-flawless standard of build and finish. When strapped on, the guitar seems to hang in a rather more perpendicular fashion than we're accustomed to – for this Gibson ES-335 diehard, the acute angle offered by a strap button situated at the heel is easier on the left arm – but we quickly adjust to it and ultimately it's down to player preference.

In Use

There may be plenty of air in the Frank Brothers Signature Model but its mahogany core helps deliver more midrange push than our ES-335. That said, it's no blunt instrument: the Lollars give voice to the Signature Model's natural acoustic chime, balance and sustain and translate those characteristics into a pleasing blend of power, clarity and extended high-end.

When the Signature Model is plugged into a Fender-style 6V6 circuit with just a touch of spring reverb it's an almost ludicrously expressive combination. Held notes hang in the air and bloom in a manner you rarely encounter when playing a box-fresh electric. At times you'd even be forgiven for thinking that a high-quality, uncoloured compressor is present in the signal chain and it's all made possible by Frank Brothers' uncompromising approach to design, timbers, parts and build.

Clean or dirty, there's a harmonic richness that's endlessly entertaining, particularly when you throw away your pick and explore what this guitar has to offer with the wider dynamic range of fingerstyle. The 25-inch scale length no doubt helps add a little snap, while the various tones on offer evoke many of Gibson's 'greatest hits' from the 225 Parsons St era.

Though independent volume and tone controls for each pickup would allow you to conjure up even more voices, even with its more simplistic wiring, the Signature Model can still handle everything from country to indie-pop, expressive blues and hard rock – all with considerable aplomb and class.

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ World-class build, feel and tones
+ Vintage meets modern with timeless and inspiring results
+ The high-end timbers used are sourced with an environmentally conscious approach

– This level of quality and refinement comes at a price

An extraordinarily confident and tasteful debut from a brand that's just four years old. Even by the standards of the modern boutique market, the Signature Model is something special

9/10

RØDE MICROPHONES

THEY BOTH SOUND AMAZING

SO WHICH MIC IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

NT1

TONAL CHARACTER
A warm vintage vibe, reminiscent of classic older mics. Smooth high-frequencies, a detailed midrange response and a fully-rounded bottom end.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE
20Hz - 20kHz

Record vocals, instruments and drums.

10 YEAR WARRANTY

DESIGNED & MANUFACTURED IN AUSTRALIA

RØDE NT1 KIT
RØDE NT1 Microphone
SMR Shock Mount

NT1-A

TONAL CHARACTER
Crystal clarity and detail with a stunning dynamic range. Delivers exceptional presence and airiness on vocal and acoustic recordings.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE
20Hz - 20kHz

Record vocals, instruments and drums.

10 YEAR WARRANTY

DESIGNED & MANUFACTURED IN AUSTRALIA

RØDE NT1-A
RØDE NT1-A Microphone
SM6 Shock Mount
Pop Filter
Dust Cover

SOURCE

Exclusively distributed in the UK & Ireland by Source • T: 020 8962 5080 • W: sourcedistribution.co.uk/rode

facebook.com/sourcedistribution twitter.com/sourcedist

Super Phat Mod
VOLUME
VOLUME
TONE
TONE
Bigsby
PATENT
No.D-169,120

EASTMAN
ANTIQUE VARNISH T64/V

Will Eastman's factory-aged homage to a hitmaking hollowbody help CHRIS VINNICOMBE wind back the clock?

Regular readers will be familiar with Eastman, but for first-timers, here's a precis: After studying music in the US, Eastman founder Qian Ni returned to his native China in 1992 and established master violin and bow-making workshops inspired by the late 19th century European tradition. Eastman has since moved into archtops, mandolins, flat-top acoustics and electrics. So far we've featured two instruments from the company's Antique Varnish series – the SB59/V single-cut solidbody electric and the E10OOSS/V 00-style acoustic. Both were impressive and now it's time for a third helping.

Like its siblings, the T64/V's faux-aged finish comprises several thin coats of shellac. French polishing produces a finish that's less robust than lacquer, but the simulated wear here is convincing and the instrument will soon take on its own unique patina of natural play-wear. And boy, will you want to play it.

Though its inspiration is clear, the T64/V is not a slavish ES-330 or Casino copy: Instead of the customary mahogany, the T64/V has a slinkily playable three-piece maple neck joined by two additional wings at the headstock that create its flared outline. The output jack has been relocated from its traditional position on the laminated maple top to the side where it's less likely to cause trouble, while the f-holes are approximately 2mm wider than those of a late-50s Gibson. The ivoroid-bound ebony 'board's asymmetric pearl inlays are an enlarged nod to the parallelograms that superseded dots on Casino 'boards in 1962.

In Use

Differences there may be, but when strapped on, the T64/V feels reassuringly familiar. The thin finish and fully-hollow construction make for an instrument that's toneful and engaging even before you plug in. When you do, in comparison to the executive lounge luxury of the Frank Brothers guitar featured on p86, the T64 is a white-knuckle ride on a seafront rollercoaster.

There's such a library of classic tones on offer, it's hard not to fall head over heels for this thing

Seymour Duncan's Antiquity P-90s are some of our favourite vintage-style pickups and fans of gnarly old-school drive sounds, woody cleans and biting 60s lead tones will not be disappointed. Sure, sustaining chords can quickly bloom into a howl so sensible stage volumes are the order of the day. But once you figure out how to tame it, there's such a library of classic tones on offer – early Stones, mid-period Beatles, Grant Green, The Kinks, Teenage Fanclub, The Black Crowes, so many more – it's hard not to fall head over heels for this thing.

Eastman has experimented with pickup positions to get the balance right – the bridge P-90 sits further forward than it would on a Casino in order to address the common complaint that it's hard to find one amp setting that works for both the bridge and the neck unit. To our ears, narrowing the gap has achieved the desired result and also added an extra splash of cream to bridge tones, while the maple neck and ebony 'board act as a counterbalance to keep things snappy.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Made in Japan with USA pickups and a nitro finish, **Epiphone's Elitist 1965 Casino** (**£1,899**) is worth auditioning – if you can find one. If you are looking for a distressed semi on a Charlie Brown budget, the **Ibanez ASV10A-TCL Artcore Vintage** street prices are **sub-£400**

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

- \+ The Antique Varnish process delivers a great feel
- \+ Proper USA Bigsby and Seymour Duncan Antiquities
- \+ Authentic vintage tones
- – Slightly untidy in the area where the bass side cutaway and fingerboard binding meet

Not all vintage hollowbodies are created equal, but we've played a lot of old Casinos and ES-330s and this beats many of them when it comes to tone and stability

9/10

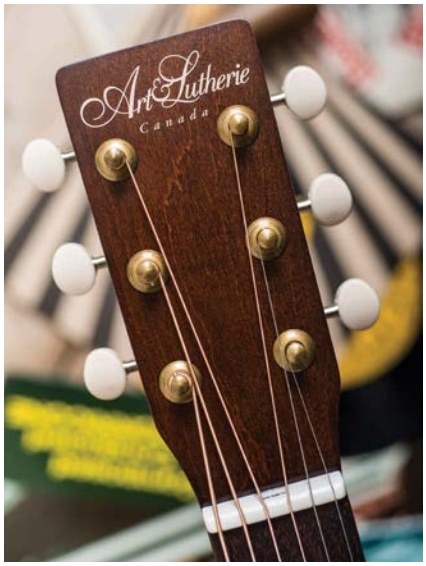
The Guitar Magazine AWARD CHOICE 9/10

KEY FEATURES

Eastman Antique Varnish T64/V

- **PRICE** £1,679 (inc hard case)
- **DESCRIPTION** Double-cutaway thinline hollowbody electric guitar. Made in China
- **BUILD** Maple laminate top, back and sides with ivoroid binding. Set maple neck with ivoroid-bound 12" radius ebony fingerboard with pearl inlays, 22 Jescar nickel-silver medium jumbo frets, bone nut, ebony headstock veneer and truss-rod cover. Black scratchplate and fittings in case
- **HARDWARE** Bigsby B7 vibrato tailpiece and tune-o-matic bridge, Gotoh vintage-style machineheads
- **ELECTRICS** 2x Seymour Duncan Antiquity P-90 dog ear pickups, 3-way toggle switch, 2x volume, 2x tone
- **SCALE LENGTH** 24.75"/629mm
- **NECK WIDTH** 43.8mm at nut, 53.6mm at 12th fret
- **NECK DEPTH** 20.7mm at first fret, 23mm at 12th fret
- **STRING SPACING** 36.8mm at nut, 51.1mm at bridge
- **WEIGHT** 6.04lb/2.73kg
- **FINISH** Antique Classic
- **CONTACT** Eastman Musical Instruments Europe **www.eastmanguitars.eu**

SUN
RECORDS
Composed
and Conducted
MORRICONE



ART & LUTHERIE ROADHOUSE

This new parlour guitar blends tone and playability with a vintage vibe and bargain price. **JAMES STEVENS** gets his blues on...

Small-bodied guitars are cool. Their portability, sweet dynamic range, and comfortable-to-play dimensions have proved extremely popular. Most manufacturers nowadays offer 'mini' models, but Art & Lutherie's Roadhouse series of acoustics and electros tick that box while pointing firmly at the past, with vintage styling and pre-war aesthetics.

Art & Lutherie is part of the Godin family, which is keen to show off its green credentials. The use of sustainably sourced woods on our review model is a case in point.

Straight out of its padded gigbag, the Roadhouse can't fail to impress, and you can almost smell the smoke-filled clubs of the 1930s. The solid spruce bookmatched top boasts a skilfully applied semi-gloss Gibson-esque 'burst. To add to the traditional feel, the guitar's shoulders are slightly sloped and the open-geared tuning posts and seats are an antique brass. The binding has an off-white hue, as do the tuner buttons and bridge pins. It's perhaps a shame then that the Graph Tech nut and saddle are bright white – a similar tint would have been more fitting. If the Bourbon Burst isn't your thing, the Roadhouse is also available in Faded Black and Tennessee Red.

Back and sides are a three-layer wild cherry laminate, described as 'solid' thereby differentiating it from HPL. The bridge is rosewood and so is the fingerboard, which is home to 19 medium frets and white plastic dot markers. The two-piece neck is Canadian silverleaf maple. In fact, 95 per cent of this guitar is made from Canadian wood, no doubt thereby helping to keep shipping costs and, in turn, the final SRP down.

The overall built quality on display here is excellent. The paperwork that accompanies the guitar says that the guitar is 'hand crafted' in Canada. While it's unlikely that the entire guitar has been formed with just chisels and sandpaper, there's nothing to justifiably complain about in terms of the guitar's finish, presentation or quality control.

In Use

In terms of the Roadhouse's performance, the diversity of tonewoods used yields a gratifying timbre. Silverleaf maple falls into the same category as mahogany, while cherry is sometimes described as splitting the difference between spruce and cedar. Add in the spruce top and you'd expect a defined, rich and projective midrange tone. In reality, however, the Roadhouse sounds as it looks, and is well suited to fingerstyle playing. Arpeggios and open tunings sing out with a sweet clarity and a comparatively impressive amount of sustain. The tone tends to make you want to play blues-style fingerstyle, and this is where the Roadhouse excels.

Aggressive strumming with a heavy pick reveals its limitations, but that's not really the point. If you want to knock six bells out of your acoustic, buy a dread!

One luthier once described making parlour guitars as 'shooting through a smaller window'. If that's the case, the Roadhouse has hit the bullseye. It's a great looking, well-built guitar and, while it's not the most versatile, it does what it does very well indeed.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The **Tanglewood Sundance Delta TW40 PD** (**£499**) is an all-mahogany (solid top) parlour. The **Vintage Paul Brett Viator** (**£299**) is an authentic-looking parlour with Fishman Sonitone pickup system. The **Epiphone EL-00 Pro** (**£249**) offers faithful 30s looks and tonewoods

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Believable vintage looks
+ Easy and comfortable to play
+ Midrange tone is perfect for fingerstyle playing
+ Excellent value for money

– Tone lacks versatility

The Roadhouse is a well-built, great sounding parlour that's as easy on the fingers as it is on the wallet

8/10

KEY FEATURES

Art & Lutherie Roadhouse

- **PRICE** £399 (inc Godin deluxe padded gigbag)
- **DESCRIPTION** Slope-shouldered, vintage styled parlour acoustic. Made in Canada
- **BUILD** Solid spruce top, wild cherry laminate back and sides, silverleaf maple neck, 12-fret neck join, Graph Tech nut and saddle
- **HARDWARE** Open-gear 18:1 antique brass tuning machines with off-white buttons
- **ELECTRICS** None
- **SCALE** Length 24.84"/630mm
- **NECK WIDTH** 44mm at nut, 54mm at 12th fret
- **NECK DEPTH** 23mm at 1st fret, 27mm at 12th fret
- **STRING SPACING** 37mm at nut, 55mm at bridge
- **WEIGHT** 3.11kg/6.85lbs
- **FINISH** Semi-gloss Bourbon Burst
- **OPTIONS** Available in Faded Black and Tennessee Red, and as an electro with Fishman Sonitone built-in electronics (£479)
- **CONTACT** 440 Distribution 0113 4433145 **www.godinguitars.com**

Honeyboy
AMPS
Honeyboy
AMPS

HONEYBOY AMPS **18 & 5**

They may be dressed like psychedelic reptiles, but these hand-wired British combos are tweed on the inside...

RICHARD PURVIS samples a pair of pint-size powerhouses

Do you like reptiles? If so, please don't be distressed by the scaly appearance of Honeyboy's amplifiers – it's just textured vinyl. We were a little unsure ourselves, until we remembered how hard it is to get hold of a crocodile in cobalt blue...

The market for boutique tweed-type amps is crowded these days, and using distinctly un-tweedy coverings is one of two ways this Scottish maker has found to stand out from the pack. The other is pricing. If you want a high-quality valve amp that's hand-wired in the UK, you won't find one much cheaper.

Andy 'Honeyboy' Smith is actually a harmonica player, and he makes amplifiers for harp-howlers as well as guitar-spankers. The basic principles are the same for both: these are new amps based on classic 1950s circuits with little deviation from vintage specs, at least on the inside. Our review models are inspired by the 5E3 Deluxe and 5F2-A Princeton respectively – the former being perhaps the most widely worshipped small amplifier of all time, the latter being a single-ended spitfire that's similar in design to the 5F1 Champ.

Beneath the wacky vinyl you'll find 20mm American white oak, which Andy reckons focuses the tone better than pine. The cabs are finger-jointed and covered in-house, using a wide range of vinyl styles (not all of them reptilian), and finished off with metal corner protectors that are powder-coated in an assortment of colours.

Honeyboy Amps 18

Hitting the catwalk in very fetching 'Blue Croc' with contrasting grey corner protectors, this is a very pretty little amp. And 'little' is the word – compared to Fender's own reissue Deluxe it's about 1cm smaller in all three dimensions, so the alnico Jensen P12R is squeezed in tight. Custom control panels are on the way, but for now we get a bought-in generic type with a couple of amendments scratched into the metal: the old ground switch has become a standby, and the second inputs are now send and return sockets for an effects loop.

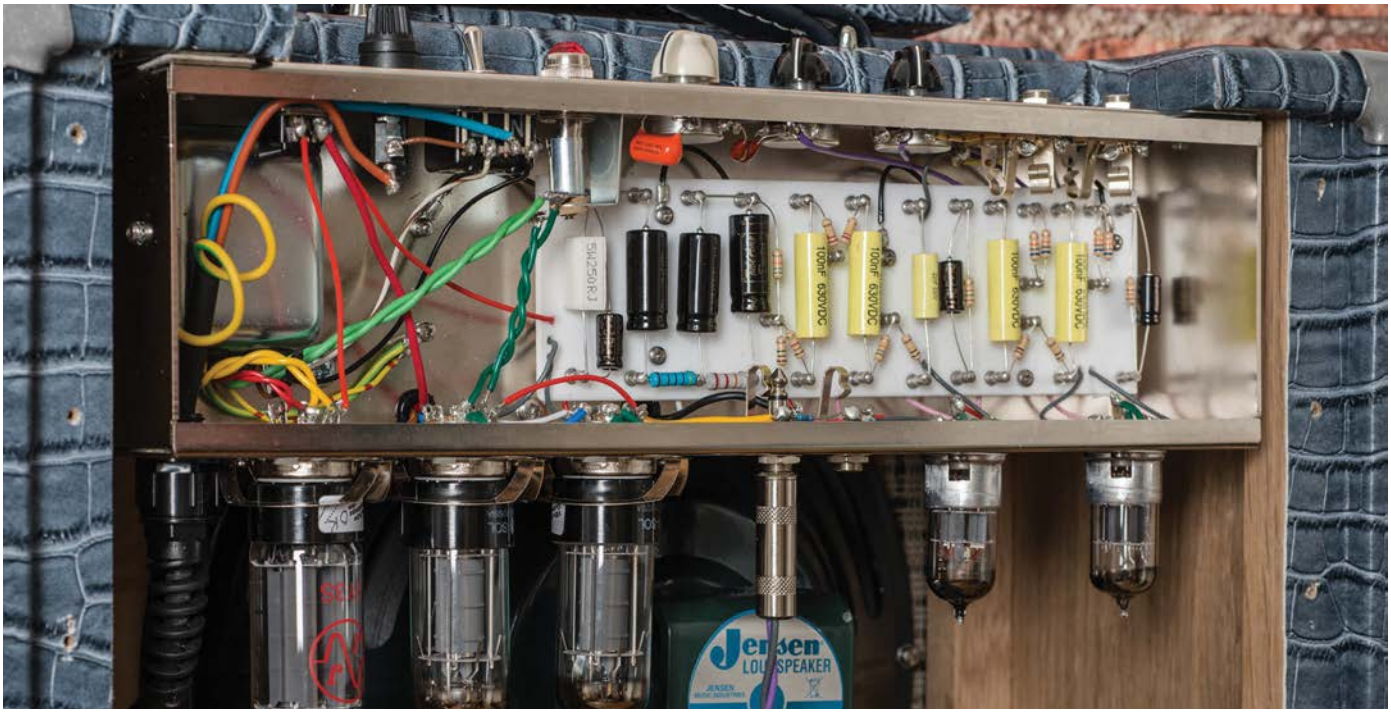
> If you want a high-quality valve amplifier, hand-wired in the UK, you won't find one much cheaper

The core of this amp is the 5E3 circuit loved by Neil Young, Billy Gibbons and countless others for its rich and throaty overdrive; a pair of cathode-biased 6V6s do the hard work, with no negative feedback loop, while three controls – bright volume, normal volume and master tone – are all a raucous rocker truly needs. The transformers are made by Trans-Tronic in Chesterfield, and the valves as supplied are all Tung-Sols. It's a simple and tidy build on the inside, and the only other feature of note is a line output next to the speaker socket.

Honeyboy Amps 5

Everything's scaled down for the five-watt model: here we get just one channel, one 6V6 and one power switch. At least there's a tone control, which is one up on a tweed Champ, and the speaker is a 10-inch Jensen P10R. Our review sample is finished in 'Burgundy Gator' with matching corners, and it couldn't be more cute if it had whiskers and a big fluffy tail.

Build quality inside and out is a match for the larger amp, and there's been no scalpel work needed this time: the '2' above the second input



LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The world is a giant toyshop for 5E3 lovers right now, starting with the **Fender '57 Custom Deluxe** (**£1,889**), a vintage reissue with an Eminence alnico speaker. British interpretations of the same circuit include the **Rift Tweed 15** (**from £1,249**), **Gartone Bluesman** (**from £1,650**) and **Flynn Tweed Deluxe** (**£1,100**). Tweed Princeton types are not so common, but you could sniff out the **Rift Tweed 5TV** (**from £1,039**) – or even build your own with a **Mojotone kit** (**$557**)

has just been carefully scraped away, as this is now a line out socket. You don't get an effects loop but there is one nifty bonus feature: a switch round the back that bypasses the negative feedback loop for a bigger, looser voice.

In Use

Now, normally we have a strum about with the clean tones before jumping into the dirt... but it's not immediately apparent that the Honeyboy 18 actually has any clean tones. The normal channel starts breaking up pretty much from the off, and we're in full-on crunch mode by four on the volume dial. Ah, but then we remember the 5E3 circuit's notoriously interactive controls: whack up the volume on the channel you're not using and the other one suddenly cleans up with almost miraculous ease.

Inevitably, the noise floor suffers when you open up a high-gain channel that you're not even playing through – but plug in an AB switch, with one channel maxed out and the other around halfway, and you've got a very effective twin-channel amp here. Most importantly, both channels sound extremely nice: the low/mid-gain stuff is sticky and smooth, while the fully cranked overdrive takes you to the very brink of the farting-out zone without letting go of its essential sweetness.

It's not a huge, expansive sound – that is, unless you plug into a slightly bigger cab with a more efficient speaker – but if you like your tweed tones thick in the mids and light in the low end, this Honeyboy will do the job. Maybe it's no coincidence that it's been voiced by a harp player.

So is the five-watt model the underpowered runt of the pair? Far from it. It's a pleasant if slightly one-dimensional affair on the first half of the volume dial – but you know nobody ever bought an amp like this to play clean.

Slam it up to nine or 10 with the negative feedback bypassed and, while that Jensen flirts with fizziness, it's surprising how close to the bigger amp this gets. In fact, hit some low powerchords at full volume and it goes a step further – the toppy transients are now compressed into oblivion as it squishes, splatters and blooms with a reckless glee that the 18-watt can't quite match. Now that's what we call ragged glory.

KEY FEATURES

Honeyboy 18

- **PRICE** £1,095
- **DESCRIPTION** 2-channel valve combo. Made in UK
- **POWER RATING** 15-18W
- **VALVES** 1x 12AX7, 1x 12AY7, 2x 6V6, 5Y3 rectifier
- **CONTROL PANEL** Standby and power switches, tone, bright volume, normal volume, bright input, normal input, effects loop send and return; line output on bottom of chassis
- **SPEAKER** 1x12, Jensen P12R
- **DIMENSIONS** 495 x 410 x 234mm
- **WEIGHT** 15.6kg/34.4lbs
- **OPTIONS** Celestion Greenback or Tayden True Brit speaker, various vinyl and hardware colours

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Tasty 5E3-style overdrive
+ Can be set up for easy clean/dirty channel-hopping
+ Line out is handy for recording
– Some of us will want to upgrade the Jensen speaker

Chunky tweed tones in a lightweight and affordable package with attention-grabbing looks

8/10

KEY FEATURES

Honeyboy 5

- **PRICE** £795
- **DESCRIPTION** Single-channel valve combo. Made in UK
- **POWER RATING** 5W
- **VALVES** 1x 12AX7, 1x 6V6, 5Y3 rectifier
- **CONTROL PANEL** Power switch, tone, volume, guitar input, line output; negative feedback switch on bottom of the chassis
- **SPEAKER** 1x10, Jensen P10R
- **DIMENSIONS** 414 x 362 x 234mm
- **WEIGHT** 13kg/28.7lbs
- **OPTIONS** Celestion Greenback or Tayden True Brit speaker, various vinyl and hardware colours
- **CONTACT** Honeyboy Amps 01389 499879 **honeyboyamps.com**

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Sweet overdrive that begs to be pushed over the edge
+ Very low noise floor
+ Negative feedback switch is a handy secret weapon
– Limited clean tones

The smaller and cheaper of these two amps is also the most fun – especially at full blast

9/10

NGS Ltd presents

The LONDON International Guitar SHOW 2017

KEMPTON PARK RACECOURSE EXHIBITION CENTRE

STAINES ROAD EAST,
SUNBURY ON THAMES TW16 5AQ

SUNDAY 29TH OCTOBER 2017

10AM TO 4.30PM

BUY, SELL & TRADE ON THE DAY

More than 150 exhibitors
Loads of stuff you won't see in the shops

EASY ACCESS. FREE PARKING
TRAIN STATION INSIDE VENUE GROUNDS

Licensed Bar & Refreshments
www.guitarshows.co.uk
Email: peter@guitarshows.co.uk
Telephone: 07403 346409

Show Sponsors

Reverb
Patrick Eggle Guitars
Musicians' Union
SFARZO Superior Guitar Strings
jhs
The Guitar Magazine
Lazy

PA provided by
Bose Professional

FREE PRIZE DRAW

win this Vintage V100MRPGM Guitar Worth £429

PLUS runners-up prizes of Guitar Magazine subscriptions

NORTHERN GUITAR SHOWS SPONSORS

BluGuitar Tone Innovation
Vintage
Fret-King by Trev Wilkinson

Superb LIVE Music

THE STORY OF ROCK GUITAR HEROES

with their "rockumentary" trip through the decades

Fret-King and Vintage Guitars present four-piece

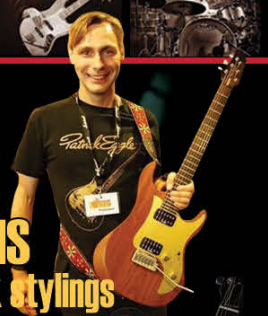
BIG RIVER

with their powerful blues-rock direct from the Thames Delta

Patrick Eggle Guitars presents

CHRIS WALTON AND THE FORGOTTEN SONS

with their original prog/rock/funk stylings



Lazy J Custom Amps present a vintage guitar workshop with renowned guitarist, historian, collector and expert

PHIL HARRIS

Working with Bose Professional Systems

THE HUERS

Folk duo - Great playing, superb songs and amazing harmonies.

ADMISSION £10.00

ACCOMPANIED UNDER 12'S FREE

FX AMPLIFICATION
68 CREAMY OVERDRIVE

The 68 Creamy Overdrive is a hand-wired British flavoured head with two watts and 20 watts of cathode-biased EL34 power. **HUW PRICE** samples some Greek boutique...

The 68 Creamy Overdrive from Greek company FX Amplification promises to "release the true British fury with 20 watts of wild gain for the hardest players". For many 'British fury' is uncomfortably associated with impulsivity and emotionally driven decision making, but the 'wild gain' bit certainly grabs our interest.

Hidden inside, the build quality is about as impressive as you will ever see. A fair proportion of the wiring is point-to-point with a mixture of carbon composite and metal oxide resistors. Most of the signal capacitors are Vishay polyester types with strategically placed silver micas, and all the valve sockets are chassis-mounted.

In addition to the TMB tone stack, there are gain and master volume controls, along with mini toggle switches for deeper bass, added brightness and two-watt output. Two speaker outs are provided along with three impedance settings. FX Amps also advises that the 68 can run with two 6V6s or even an EL34 plus a 6V6 with no need to re-bias.

In Use

For testing a Les Paul, Strat, Teye Pistolero and a Tele are run through the 68 and an Egnater 1x12 cabinet loaded with a Celestion G12H greenback. Even with 50s-spec Strat and Tele single coils, glistening Plexi clean tones aren't on the menu. The 68 is all about the overdrive, and there is as much of that as anybody could realistically demand.

In a sense, the 68 resembles Fender's The Edge Deluxe signature amp, because there is virtually no 'grace period' before the onset

The 68's black and gold stylings are not accidental – this is an amp that's ready to rock

of overdrive and backing off your guitar volume is only way to get things to run clean-ish. With all three tone controls set at noon and the bright and deep switches in their off positions, the basic tonal signature is noticeably on the bright side.

The 68 is voiced for heavier players who use darker-toned, high-output humbuckers

When searching for maximum clean headroom, the logical starting point is to max out the master and slowly increase the gain. However you'll soon discover that the master control does something peculiar in the upper third of its range because it adds more significantly to brightness than to volume. For sweetening things up you'll need to stick master in reverse until you hit a sweeter spot at around one o'clock.

Even then things remain glassy bright, so attention shifts to the tone controls – where you will discover that they are not especially powerful. The bass control brings up the lows in a gentle sort of way until it reaches around noon, whereupon there's a slight but unexpected dip in weight as you progress further. The treble control certainly slices off the very top end, but it's actually the middle control, which is centred on the upper mid cut frequencies, that has the most influence on the 68's voicing.

It's quite possible to dial in sweet and mildly overdriven tones with single coils but the tone controls end up with bass near maximum, middle at minimum and treble around 10 o'clock. We prefer having the deep switch engaged too but the bright switch's powerful effect merely compounds the brightness issue.

So let's be clear and suggest the 68 is not really an amp for those chasing Hendrix or SRV tones with single coil pickups. We think it's voiced for heavier players who use darker-toned, high-output humbuckers with a lot of wax potting.

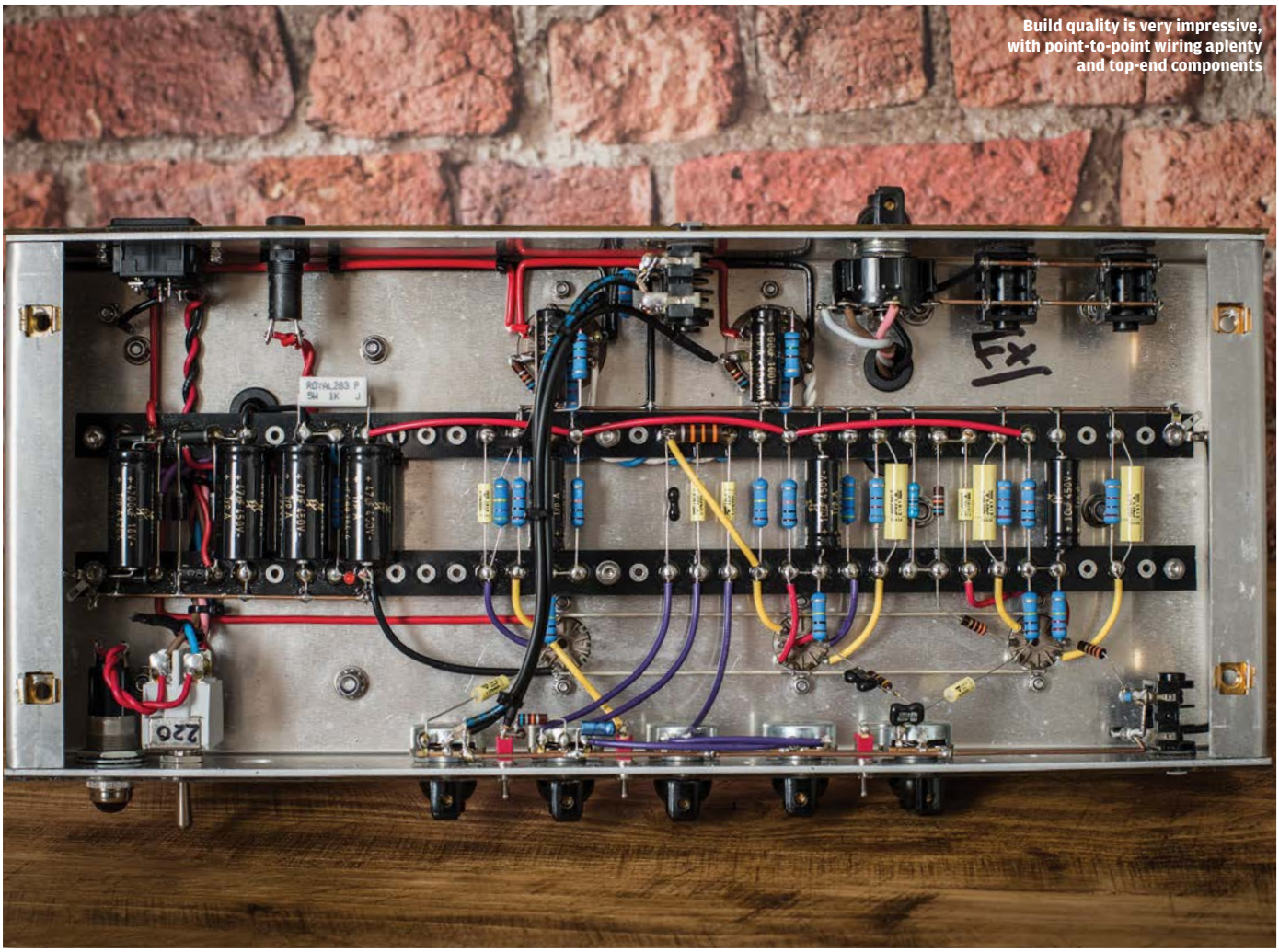
Swapping over to the Les Paul supports this hypothesis – despite the test guitar being loaded with rather bright Monty's PAFs. Here the 68's slightly lean bass response serves to maintain tight lows and the upper-mid bite becomes more about articulation than edginess.

The fun begins as it now becomes possible to use the middle and treble controls for creative tone shaping

KEY FEATURES

FX Amplification 68 Creamy Overdrive

- **PRICE** €1,700
- **DESCRIPTION** Single-channel cathode bias valve head. Made in Greece
- **POWER RATING** 20W/2W
- **VALVES** 3x 12AX7, 2x EL34s
- **CONTROL PANEL** Input socket, gain, bass, mid, treble, volume, bright, deep, loud/quiet, power
- **REAR PANEL** Loop send & return, 4-ohm, 8-ohm & 16-ohm switch, 2x speaker outputs, IEC socket
- **DIMENSIONS** 500mm x 220mm x 210mm
- **WEIGHT** 13kg
- **OPTIONS** Various coverings
- **CONTACT** FX Amps
www.fxamps.com
www.fxamps.com



Build quality is very impressive, with point-to-point wiring aplenty and top-end components

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The **Friedman Pink Taco PT-20** (**£1,312**) and **Mini Dirty Shirley** (**£1,392**) are both one-channel, 20-watt heads powered by EL84s – with effects loops, TMB tone stacks and a gain structure switching. The **Morgan MVP23** (**£1,435**) has a TMB tone stack, EL84 valves and power can be adjusted from 0.25 watts to 23 watts. With 0.3 watts to 28 watts of adjustable power and a wide range of classic and crunchy Marshall-inspired tones, the **Victory Sheriff 22** (**£799**) also features an effects loop

rather than damage limitation. Once you get a feel for the way these controls interact, you can shift between late 60s blues rock grind and a far more contemporary crunch with ease.

For the former, try pushing the midrange control beyond half way and you'll hear a fuller tone with an ever-present air of aggression. Next dial back the treble to normalise the top end and the 68 begins to dish up some heavy trad metal and high-powered blues tones. We find that it's best to dial things in with the guitar volume controls rolled back to eight or nine. This helps to achieve a fine general purpose playing tone with the preferred amount of overdrive, but with scope to clean things up if needs be, plus a tad more gain and crunch held in reserve.

The 'smiley face' EQ curve of contemporary rock can be achieved too, but not in the usual way. Rather than floor the middle and dime both bass and treble, the right spot for the treble control seems to be around the one o'clock mark. This is where you begin to hear the 68 at it's most brutal and relentless.

When we're assessing the tonal quality of high gain amps, we're always looking for fizziness, oddly beating harmonics and uneven decay. These are the telltale signs that the distortion may not be entirely thermionic in origin and the components are not quite what they should be. The low-power switching is a real bonus in this regard because without the masking effects of speaker compression and breakup, you get a sonic window into the amp.

Pleasingly, while the 68 is a brutal, heavy and surprisingly loud amp, there's also a refined and toneful quality that retains dynamic response even at high gain. It's also crisp and clear for soloing and sustain is such that it can probably hang onto a note longer than you. Calling it Creamy seems fair enough and in the 68's rather excellent two-watt mode, the creaminess has a richer and very enjoyable 'full-fat' quality.

We can't recommend the 68 as a general purpose Brit-voiced mid-power head simply because there's insufficient clean headroom available, and the fundamental voicing is so bright that the bright switch is almost superfluous when you're using it with 'classic' single coil pickups.

However, it's a different story with humbuckers – in particular, the DiMarzios in the Teye Pistolero. If you're primarily interested in heavy valve overdrive, crunch and infinite sustain at practical volume levels, the 68 certainly delivers.

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Massive gain at sensible volume
+ Loud for a 20W amp, but 2W setting sounds excellent
+ Outstanding build quality

- Voiced for brightness
- Very little clean headroom
- Tone stack a tad lackluster

An exciting and beautifully made amp with massive quantities of tonally refined gain, but some may struggle with the inherent brightness and lack of clean headroom

8/10

Watford Valves

24 HOUR ONLINE ORDERING AT www.watfordvalves.com
All valves individually multi-tested and digitally matched.
Expert advice on all valve amps.
THE MUSICIANS CHOICE ☎ 01923 893270

CRYOGENIC

AC/DC, Oasis, Brian May, Manics, Radiohead and Peter Gabriel buy our valves
www.watfordvalves.com

HARMA 5881 "The Rockers Choice"

These super military valves were used by Boogie & Marshall in the 1980's and these Cryogenically treated 5881 have more sonic clarity and punch than any other 5881 with a bottom end kick like a mule. So if you're Boogie used STR 425 and it has now lost its soul, or your Marshall has lost its bite just try these, satisfaction guaranteed. Available in selected dual matched pairs & quads at £24 each valve

Read the full Cryo review on our website www.watfordvalves.com

HARMA RETRO - CRYO SUPERIOR GRADE

The Harma Retro Cryo range recreates the classic sounds and designs of the most famous new old stock valves for a new generation of musician. So if you want an EL34 to crunch like an old Mullard or a 6L6GC to sing like a Sylvania. Then the Harma Cryo Retro range is the one for you.
All preamp valves are drive tested. All output valves are high plate volt drive tested under full working conditions for maximum reliability. Used by the industry's biggest names including Brian May, Thunder, Iron Maiden and the We Will Rock You shows worldwide.

ECC83-Retro Cryo	**£21.60**	**KT66- Retro Cryo**	**£48.00**
EL34-Retro Cryo	**£24.00**	**5U4GB- Retro Cryo**	**£24.00**
EL84-Retro Cryo	**£24.00**	**6550A-Retro Cryo**	**£34.56**
EZ81-Retro Cryo	**£24.00**	**6L6GC-Retro Cryo**	**£24.00**
GZ34- Retro Cryo	**£26.40**	**6550A-Retro Cryo**	**£34.56**

15% off 15% off

ECC83 JJ CRYO PREAMP KITS & OUTPUT VALVES

These specially selected JJ ECC83-S Cryo preamp kits combined with selected and matched JJ output valves will provide an outstanding upgrade to your amp. The Cryo treatment gives deeper, more controlled bass, cleaner treble and smoother distortion. All preamp kits come in standard or high gain versions and include a balanced valve for the phase inverter position. All output valves are dual matched on current and output gain.

Cryo Preamp kits		Cryo Output valves	
3 valve	**£48.96**	**EL34 JJ Cryo**	**£48.96**
4 valve	**£65.28**	**EL84 JJ Cryo**	**£15.30**
5 valve	**£81.60**	**6L6GC JJ Cryo**	**£20.40**
6 valve	**£97.92**	**6V6GT JJ Cryo**	**£18.80**

FREE DELIVERY FREE DELIVERY

CELESTION SPEAKERS
Big discounts on Guitar and Bass speakers

Celestion speakers have been behind some of the greatest names in Rock History. We have all G12 models on FREE DELIVERY to UK mainland; see our website for full details. We have upto 50% off Bass Guitar speaker see our website for full details

Celestion Alnico Blue	**£199**	**Celestion Bass BL10-200X 30% OFF**	
Celestion A Type	**£69**	**Celestion Bass BL12-200X 30% OFF**	
Celestion G12H Red	**£105**	**Celestion Bass BL15-400X 50% OFF**	

FREE DELIVERY FREE DELIVERY

KEELEY PEDALS
FREE DELIVERY on many Keeley branded pedals

Keeley pedals provide the ultimate in tonal clarity and sonic fidelity. We have all the new Tube Screamers and the stunning new Work Stations in stock. We can cater for all your overdrive needs.

Keeley Tesla MK3 Fuzz Ltd Ed	**£174**	**Keeley DS-9 Distortion**	**£149**
Keeley Tone Worksation	**£294**	**Keeley Super Phat Mod**	**£149**
Keeley 4 Knob Compressor	**£168**	**Keeley Wolff Octave ltd Ed**	**£179**

Full range in stock, see our website

*** JJ TESLA TRADE OFFER ***

JJ Tesla valves have a worldwide reputation for excellent sound quality. These valves are one of our most popular ranges for our trade and service customers. Our full trade and quantity details on JJ and other popular valve brands are on our website with quantity prices starting as low as 10 pieces per type. Here are some examples of our JJ quantity prices:

ECC81	**10 Pcs**	**£7.20 Each**	**EL34 mk2**	**16 Pcs**	**£12.00 Each**
ECC82	**10 Pcs**	**£7.20 Each**	**E34L**	**16 Pcs**	**£13.50 Each**
ECC83-S	**10 Pcs**	**£7.50 Each**	**EL84**	**16 Pcs**	**£7.20 Each**
ECC83-S	**20 Pcs**	**£7.20 Each**	**6L6GC**	**16 Pcs**	**£13.20 Each**
ECC83-S	**40 Pcs**	**£6.90 Each**	**6V6GTS**	**16 Pcs**	**£12.00 Each**
ECC83-MG	**10 Pcs**	**£9.00 Each**	**5881**	**16 Pcs**	**£13.20 Each**
ECC83-MG	**20 Pcs**	**£8.76 Each**	**6550**	**12 Pcs**	**£25.20 Each**
5751	**10 Pcs**	**£9.00 Each**	**KT88**	**12 Pcs**	**£26.40 Each**

GAIN RATED FENDER PREAMP REVALVE KITS

A specially selected range of gain rated pre amp kits for your Fender amplifier. If you want more clean headroom how about our low gain 55 kit which will reduce the gain by 55%. Want a nice crunchy overdrive? Then fit our standard gain kit, want to take the brittle edge off your sound? then fit our medium gain 15 kit. Get the tone you want from your Fender today with these amazing pre amp kits. Full range on our website.

	Pro Junior	Blues Junior	Hot Rod Deluxe	Hot Rod Deville
Low Gain 55	**£34.56**	**£46.08**	**£46.08**	**£46.08**
Low Gain 40	**£26.88**	**£38.40**	**£38.40**	**£38.40**
Medium Gain 30	**£49.68**	**£62.64**	**£62.64**	**£62.64**
Medium Gain 15	**£30.72**	**£42.24**	**£42.24**	**£42.24**
Standard Gain	**£26.88**	**£38.40**	**£38.40**	**£38.40**

ORIGINAL USA MADE - PHILIPS

These valves are made with the highest quality materials and the tightest quality control as specified by the US Government. They are also the best sounding valves which outperform and out last their modern counterparts. They also help your amp reach it's true potential which is why NOS valves are the most sought after by studios and professional musicians.

ECC81-12AT7	**£12.00**	**EL84-6BQ5**	**£48.00**	**6L6WGB-5881**	**£38.40**
ECC82-5814A	**£21.60**	**5U4GB**	**£28.56**	**6V6GT**	**£33.60**
ECC83-5751	**£40.80**	**5Y3WGTA**	**£24.00**	**6111WA**	**£18.00**
ECC81-12AT7	**£54.00**	**6AU6WC**	**£12.00**	**7199**	**£36.00**
ECF82-6U8A	**£8.40**	**6C4WA**	**£8.40**	**12BH7A**	**£36.00**

HARMA SUPERIOR GRADE

Our own brand, the best selected and tested valves in the industry. All preamp valves are drive tested. All output valves are high plate volt tested under full working conditions for maximum reliability.
Used by the industries biggest names including Brian May, Thunder, Iron Maiden and the We Will Rock You shows worldwide.

ECC81-STR	**£14.40**	**EL84/E84L burst tested**	**£21.60**
ECC83-STR	**£14.40**	**EL84 Retro**	**£18.00**
ECC83-7025-STR	**£14.40**	**5881-Mil Spec**	**£19.20**
EL34 STR	**£19.20**	**6L6GC STR**	**£21.60**
EL34 Retro	**£21.60**	**6L6GC-Retro**	**£21.60**
EL84/E84L Standard	**£18.00**	**GZ34-Retro**	**£21.60**

FREE DELIVERY FREE DELIVERY

HARMA GUITAR SPEAKERS
All Hand Made in England

After extensive research consulting many professional musicians Watford Valves now produce Harma high quality handmade Guitar Speakers.
Here is one of our customers reviews -
J McLachlan said "**Simply the best speaker I have ever used**" after fitting the Harma Bright Sapphire in his Fender Deluxe reverb.

American Series		British Series	
Bright Sapphire	£78	Blue Ruby	£78
Clear Sapphire	£78	Classic Ruby	£72
Dark Sapphire	£78	Vintage Ruby	£72
Smooth Sapphire	£78	Vintage Topaz	£78

FREE DELIVERY TO UK MAINLAND

MAIL ORDER Fax: 01923 679207
☎ **01923 893270**

SOLO SWITCH VISA

see our new website
www.watfordvalves.com

ORANGE
GETAWAY DRIVER & FUR COAT

Orange's art department has been having fun again, this time decorating an amp-style overdrive and a wild octave fuzz. **RICHARD PURVIS** takes a trip back to the 1970s...

Up until now, the Orange stompbox venture has been an exercise in sniffing out interesting niches in the stompbox world. So, we've had a pair of EQ devices, an ABY switch and a compressor are not exactly pedalboard staples. Now, though, it seems someone's decided it's time to wheel out the big guns. The big, hairy, sweaty, denim-clad guns.

Orange, remember, is a company that made its name with some of the loudest amplifiers of the 1970s. Well, now that heritage is making itself felt in the pedal range: these two latest additions are an overdrive that's billed as a 70s amp in a box, and an octave-adding fuzz that nods squarely in the direction of the Foxx Tone Machine of 1971.

Like the rest of the Orange effects line-up, these are hefty metal units with massive blue status LEDs and side recesses to protect the input and output jacks. The Fur Coat has the usual bar across the centre to prevent your spangled platform boots from the accidentally knocking controls, but this hasn't been deemed necessary for the Getaway Driver, whose three knobs are safely tucked away near the top of the enclosure. Well, all the more room for that stylish picture of a dodgy-looking couple with a police car in their rear-view mirror.

If you like atonal walls of noise as much as we do, you'll love the Fur Coat's overloading harmonics

Getaway Driver

Fascinated though we are by the unknown fate of the two fugitives on the front, it's the insides of the Getaway Driver that deserve our full attention. This pedal has been

voiced with reference to a number of 70s amps, and promises everything from a clean boost to classic roaring overdrive. Orange says the drive comes from single-ended JFET circuitry running in Class A, with a charge pump turning your standard nine volts into 18 for greater headroom. And in fact, you can run it from a 12V adapter to make it sound even bigger.

The three white knobs are simple enough – volume, gain and bite (tone) – but this Driver has a couple of secrets under the hood. Unscrew the baseplate and you'll find a button to tame the treble in the 20kHz zone… then screw it back on again and you'll notice there's a second jack socket on the left side. This is a headphone/DI output with speaker simulation; it's active even when the overdrive is bypassed, so in theory you could run this output into the PA via a DI box and use the Getaway Driver as a two-channel amp.

Fur Coat

The artwork on this one is downright macabre – please, Orange, tell her to zip it up before she catches her death. More importantly, the Fur Coat is a vintage-style octave fuzz powered by a combination of silicon diodes and germanium transistors.

If you ignore the extra footswitch and the dial marked 'octave', this could pass for a standard filth-generator, with the usual controls for volume, fuzz and EQ. But that fourth knob is interesting: it means the added high octave can be blended into the signal to taste, which is not something you could do with a Foxx Tone Machine.

Fuzzes don't always get on well with buffers, which is why this is Orange's only true-bypass stompbox; we're advised to place it first in line after the guitar for best results. Oh, and if you're unfamiliar with the octave fuzz effect, you should probably have a listen to the pedal that did it first: Jimi's Roger Mayer Octavia, as used on *Purple Haze*…

In Use

The Getaway Driver is a one-box festival of pure rock. With all the controls at noon it adds a heavy dose of old-school grind, demanding to be fed power chords, thumping riffs and aggressive solo runs. The overdrive gets more amp-like as you crank it, a mix of strong mids and sweetly compressed treble really bringing out the best in a Les Paul at full gain; but you can also pull it right back to zero for a simple, uncoloured clean boost. Well, clean-ish.

The difference made by that internal switch is minimal, but it might be just enough to save your ears if you're using single-coils and a spanky amp. And the headphone output? It sounds surprisingly decent for silent practice, though it's not entirely free of that plasticky straight-into-the-desk effect that we all know and don't love.

The Fur Coat couldn't sound more different – this is an archetypal warm, thick, smooth, all-obliterating fuzz. Keep the EQ shy of halfway and you're broadly in Big Muff territory, but there's plenty of biting treble to add in if you want it. Then step on the octave footswitch… and prepare for a sudden injection of rasping rage. It's very much like a ring modulator: pure power chords sound viciously cool, but play a simple minor seventh and you literally won't be able to make out a note for all the overloading harmonics. If you like atonal walls of noise as much as we do, you'll love this.

But what we're really here for is the single-note stuff. There's an added wiriness to lead lines in all positions, and once you get up around the 12th fret the higher octave really starts to climb out and take over… or not, depending on how bold you've been with the blend control. Either way, it's spiky, psychedelic, and not for the sonically conservative among us.

By the way, both of these pedals do sound a touch bigger and brighter with a 12-volt power supply – it's not essential, but you might not want to go back to nine volts once you've tried it.

KEY FEATURES

Orange Getaway Driver

- **PRICE** £119
- **DESCRIPTION** Overdrive pedal. Made in China
- **CONTROLS** Volume, gain, bite (tone); internal push-push switch for treble cut
- **FEATURES** Cab-simulated headphone/DI output; buffered bypass, powered by 9V battery or 9-12v DC adaptor (not supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS** 130x95x65mm

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Big, chunky 'classic rock' tones
+ Cab-simulated headphone output is a handy addition
+ Tough, practical build

– Doesn't sound dramatically different from a lot of other overdrives

A solid addition to the Orange pedal line-up, with a couple of clever added features in the trunk

8/10

KEY FEATURES

Orange Fur Coat

- **PRICE** £119
- **DESCRIPTION** Fuzz pedal. Made in China
- **CONTROLS** Volume, fuzz, EQ, octave blend; second footswitch to engage octave
- **FEATURES** True bypass, powered by 9V battery or 9-12V DC adaptor (not supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS** 130x95x65mm
- **CONTACT** Orange Amps 020 8905 2828 **www.orangeamps.com**

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Sounds absolutely huge
+ Being able to dial in the octave effect is a real bonus
+ Same road-ready build as the Getaway Driver

– Doesn't really do low-gain

A well made and ingeniously flexible take on the brutal but inspiring octave fuzz effect

8/10

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE…

Orange Getaway Driver

How to pick an amp-like overdrive pedal these days? The choice out there is quite overwhelming, but a couple of solid places to start would be the **Keeley Super Phat Mod** (**£149**) and the much-loved **Fulltone OCD** (**£132**). For specifically Orange-based sounds with built-in cab simulation, try the **Tech 21 Oxford** (**£189**)

Fur Coat

The essential *Purple Haze* pedal is the **Roger Mayer Octavia Classic** (**£239**). But just between ourselves, the Foxx-inspired but now discontinued **Danelectro French Toast** (**£50-£70**) is an absolute killer if you can find one on Reverb or the like. Otherwise, give the **EarthQuaker Hoof Reaper** (**£259**) a whirl – it combines two fuzz circuits with octave up

TV JONES
STARWOOD TELE PICKUPS

Nobody knows more about DeArmonds and assorted 'Trons than TV Jones but can he really make a Tele sound like mid-50s Gretsch? **HUW PRICE** reaches for the Starwoods

The Guitar Magazine AWARD CHOICE 9/10

KEY FEATURES

TV Jones Starwood Tele Pickup Set

- **PRICE** $245
- **DESCRIPTION** DeArmond Dynasonic-voiced single-coil pickups for T-style guitars. Made in the USA
- **SPECS** 44 AWG magnet wire, DeArmond-style slugs, vulcanised fibreboard flat work, wax potted, nickel, chrome or gold plating
- **CONTACT** TV Jones +1 360 779 4002 **www.tvjones.com**

If you like Gretsches there's a strong possibility that you are a Telecaster fan, too. The popularity of Fender's Filter'Tron-loaded Cabronita is therefore easy to comprehend, but is the earlier Gretsch DeArmond tone equally well matched to a T-style platform?

Combining the magnetic slugs and 44 AWG plain enamel wire from the TVJ T-Armond and the fibreboard flatwork from a conventional Tele, the result is the DeArmond-inspired Starwood Tele set. Best of all, these are drop in replacements so you can change your tone without any woodwork being required.

Despite the 7.6k and 11.7k readings, these are not overwound pickups. The magnet wire is simply a thinner gauge than you'll find on most classic pickups and therefore has higher resistance. Aside from the wider slug diameter, the bridge pickup appears conventional, while the neck unit emulates the open-topped look of original DeArmonds. For this test the pickups were installed in a swamp ash Telecaster with a maple neck.

In Use

One thing that always surprises us about Cabronitas is just how much Telecaster tone remains despite the radical changes. The Starwood pickups are more transformative, but if you're considering a major departure from the norm, that should be music to your ears.

Both pickups sound wide open and clear in the hi-fi way that proper DeArmonds do, yet they're never excessively bright and aren't at all shrill. The tone also has a boldness and solidity that you'd never find with vintage-style Tele pickups. In spite of these common traits, the two pickups here have some key differences.

> Both pickups sound wide open and clear in the hi-fi way that proper DeArmonds do

The bridge pickup doesn't do Tele bite or snap – instead you get strong mids with an extraordinary amount of twang and quack. The note attack is different, too, because the bridge gives you a boxy clunk rather than a percussive click. There is a pronounced upper-mid resonance that lends character to the midrange and the string-to-string balance makes it very player friendly.

Switching to the neck pickup yields a more fluid and flutey tone. The woody roundness is reminiscent of a Charlie Christian sound, but the Starwood has more high frequency content and clarity than both a CC pickup and a typical Tele neck unit. That said, its brightness is far smoother than a Strat-style pickup and the Starwood doesn't really do glassiness. If you're simply looking for a replacement neck pickup for your Tele then the Starwood certainly compliments a stock bridge pickup on its own.

The in-between setting provides yet another distinctive tone with a hollowed out and phasey quality that lends itself equally well to Chet picking and funky rhythm parts. If it weren't for the absence of microphonic squeal, you may well be able to fool a listener into thinking you're playing a vintage Duo Jet. Add a Bigsby and perhaps a set of flatwounds, and you may even convince yourself.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Needless to say DeArmond soundalikes for T-style guitars are a bit of a one off. However similar sets in the same 'drop-in' spirit include **Vintage Vibe's Blade** T-style set **$198** with ceramic magnets for Charlie Christian tones in both positions, and the **McNelly T-Bar** set **£149** for P-90 tones

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Superb, characterful sounds
+ Super sensitive
+ Very wide range of tones
+ Equally good clean and dirty

– The sonic character may not suit everybody's tastes

If you want to combine mid-50s Gretsch tones with the playability of a Telecaster, there's no better practical way to achieve it

9/10

25TH ANNIVERSARY

SATURDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2017
DOORS OPEN 10AM - 5-30PM
EXETER CORN EXCHANGE EX1 1BW

SEE PRODUCTS FROM:

Taylor, Ibanez, Ernie Ball Music Man, Andy Manson, Bare Knuckle Pickups, Orange, Faith, Thorpy FX, Peavey, Millman Guitars, Sterling, Marshall, EBS, Supro, Yamaha, Z Vex Effects, Cort, Mark Bass, Strymon, Tanglewood, Vox, Ashdown Engineering, Roland, Manson Guitar Works, Heistercamp Straps, Seth Baccus Guitars, BOSS, Line 6, Recording King, Zoom, Hercules, Shergold, L.R. Baggs, Laney, Wampler, Right On Straps, AMS

DEMONSTRATIONS PERFORMANCES SHOW DEALS

WWW.MANSONS.CO.UK
MANSONS GUITAR SHOP EXETER 01392 496379

SEYMOUR DUNCAN
POWERSTAGE 170

Do you resent having to lug a heavy amp to gigs when your pedals are doing all the tone-shaping work? **RICHARD PURVIS** weighs up a possible solution...

KEY FEATURES

PowerStage 170

- **PRICE** £445
- **DESCRIPTION** 170W/85W solid-state pedalboard amp. Made in USA
- **CONTROLS** Level, bass, middle, treble
- **FEATURES** 4-8 ohm speaker output, cooling fan; LEDs for power, temperature warning and over-current warning
- **DIMENSIONS** 136 x 128 x 75mm
- **CONTACT** Rosetti 01376 550033 **rosetti.co.uk** **seymourduncan.com**

It's easy to feel adrift in this fast-changing world – touchscreens in our supermarkets, wifi in our fridges... and now you're saying that some guitarists are using standalone power amps again? Yup, you see, not everyone is entirely happy lugging a hulking great amplifier around. Thanks to the growth of high-quality floor-based preamp and modelling pedals in recent years, some players are preferring to use a lightweight power amp that sits in a rack or atop a speaker cab to provide the oomph for these board-based solutions, while also keeping the load-in struggles to a minimum.

Seymour Duncan's new Powerstage 170 is in many ways the ultimate end to this quest for lightweight portability – it's small enough to fit on a pedalboard, and you don't even need a separate preamp to drive it, as it has its own preamp section – albeit a purely functional, non-crunching one.

There's a rackmount version that pumps out 700 solid-state watts (for £779), but this tiny 170-watt model is the potential game-changer. That's 170 watts into a four-ohm cab, by the way, or 85-watt into eight-ohms. It's a beautiful piece of kit, with a brushed metal control surface that's home to just four dials: output level and a three-way active tonestack. There's a little cooling fan at the front, while on the back you get one guitar input and one speaker output, and that's the lot – this is stylish minimalism from the high-end hi-fi school.

In Use

First, let's sit and look at this thing for a minute while we work out what to do with it. An open-back 2x12 cab will happily handle the air-pushing, but what sort of tone-shaping preamp do we put in front? There are a few options in the pedal cupboard, but to start with we'll try nothing. Might as well put that onboard preamp to the test...

With a Telecaster plugged straight into the back of the unit, what comes out is 100 per cent clean and not exactly dripping with character; but it's tonally well balanced, and passable for practice at least. And when we bring in a Tech 21 Blonde preamp with drive set low just to mojo things up a bit, suddenly we have a real, three-dimensional amp on our hands. Alright, the Duncan isn't doing much here – its job is simply to amplify what it hears from the Tech 21 – but it does that well, and feels at least as powerful as a 30-watt valve amp.

Turn up the drive, or swap out that preamp pedal for a standard distortion box, and now we feel the benefit of this unit's generous clean headroom. It goes trouser-flappingly loud, the EQ section is super-responsive, and high-gain pedals sound especially clear and punchy. Ah, now it all makes sense. Blues players, stick with your tweed combos and don't worry about a thing; hard rock and metal fans, this one's for you.

It goes trouser-flappingly loud, the EQ is super-responsive, and high-gain pedals sound especially punchy

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

If you've got room for a full-size power amp, the **Fryette Power Station PS-2** (**£699**) offers 50W of 6L6 valve power with built-in reactive attenuation. Your pedal-sized emergency options include the **Electro-Harmonix 44 Magnum** (**£144**) and **Mooer Baby Bomb** (**£105**)

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Big clean tones make for a great pedal platform
+ Elegant design and solid build
+ Compact enough to live on your pedalboard

- You'll need to bring your own distortion sounds

Takes your pedal-based tone and makes it big enough to drive a speaker – job done

8/10

THE MOST ADVANCED GUITAR STRINGS KNOWN TO MAN

LEGENDARY TONE • SUPERIOR BREAK RESISTANCE • UNPARALLELED DURABILITY

THE PARADIGM GUARANTEE

PARADIGM are the strongest, most durable guitar strings on the planet.
If your strings break or rust within 90 days of purchase, we'll replace them.†

ERNIE BALL®

ernieball.co.uk/paradigm

†A copy of Ernie Ball's full replacement 90 day limited guarantee is available at ernieball.co.uk/paradigm

UNIVERSAL AUDIO
APOLLO TWIN MKII QUAD

The Apollo Twin MkII is the latest upgraded version of Universal Audio's popular 'studio in a box' audio interface. **HUW PRICE** gets star struck...

The Guitar Magazine AWARD CHOICE 9/10

KEY FEATURES

Universal Audio Apollo Twin Mk II Quad

- **PRICE** £1,299
- **DESCRIPTION** Digital audio interface and monitor controller. Made in China
- **SPECS** 24-bit/192KHz conversion, 2x unison mic/line preamps, 2x line outputs, front-panel Hi-Z DI input and headphone output integrated talkback microphone, virtual mixer software and Realtime Analog Classics UAD plug-in bundle
- **COMPATIBILITY** Mac – macOS 10.10-10.12, Quad Core i7 processor, Thunderbolt port, 6Gb hard disk space. Windows PC – Windows 10 w/Anniversary Update (64-Bit Edition), Thunderbolt 3 via USB-C port, Thunderbolt 3 to Thunderbolt 2 adapter, Quad Core i7 processor, Thunderbolt port, 6Gb hard disk space
- **RANGE OPTIONS** Apollo Twin Mk II Solo (£756) and Apollo Twin Mk II Duo (£959)
- **CONTACT** Universal Audio 013308080136 **www.uaudio.com**

Today's digital audio interfaces are both multifaceted and simpler to use. The Apollo Twin package exemplifies this, as a compact desktop device combining two microphone/line inputs with Hi-Z DI input, monitor controls, integrated talkback, powerful DSP acceleration and a 'virtual mixing console'.

The DI input might be the most interesting feature for guitarists and bassists because it allows us to tap into UA's outstanding amp emulations. The package includes the Half-Stack and Bass Amp Room plug-ins, plus the Raw Distortion pedal.

You can also trail various UA amp and pedal plug-ins, and purchase the ones you want after the trail period is over. These are top quality digital ones that work just as well for jamming as they do recording.

The Mk II is compatible with both Windows 10 and macOS provided you have Thunderbolt connectivity, and you can choose from three levels of processing power – Solo, Duo or Quad. These determine how many plug-ins you can run simultaneously.

Bundled up is a plug-in package of UAD 'Analog Classics' featuring Legacy versions of the LA-2A, 1176LN, Pultec EQP-1A and more. The 610-B mic preamp/EQ features Unison technology so you can flavour sounds as you are recording.

In Use

We connect the Apollo Twin to your computer, power up and download the UA software – it's all very simple and we're up and running with Logic and GarageBand in minutes. Controls on the device are simple but intuitive, and tracking equally so. If you can operate a mic preamp and a basic mixing desk you'll have no trouble with the interface or the console.

Essentially, this is a pro-quality recording studio contained in a box barely larger than a trackpad

Compared to our aging Firewire interface, the quality of the digital converters is a revelation. It sounds much cleaner, clearer and detailed.

The plug-ins are so fantastic they can elevate the quality of your projects to a pro level and remember a plug in can be used on each track. Analogue effects are wonderful but they only process one track at a time.

With UAD plug-ins, you are only limited by the amount of DSP, but the more you use them, the more you'll want to use them. If you can afford the Quad version, it's worth the extra investment to avoid a plug-in limit.

Alternatively, if you own a UAD Accelerator, you can run it simultaneously – so long as you have Firewire and Thunderbolt. This may provide sufficient DSP with a cheaper Solo or Duo Apollo Twin.

Essentially this is a pro-quality recording studio contained in a box barely larger than a trackpad. Input and output channels are limited, which may compromise recording and mixing sessions. For overdubbing at home or in the studio, however, the Twin is almost perfect.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The specs differ considerably but alternative Thunderbolt interfaces you might consider include the **Arturia AudioFuse** (**£539**), **Focusrite Claret** (**£525**), **Resident Audio** (**£199**), **MOTU 828X** (**£799**) and **RME Fireface RMX** (**£2,484**)

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Superior digital conversion
+ Ease of use
+ Outstanding plug-in quality
+ Eight extra inputs via optical port

- Limited analogue ins and outs
- No optical output and just one Thunderbolt port

This is all you need for overdubbing, mixing or simply enjoying the finest audio quality from your computer

9/10

SOUNDPAD

Tel 01271 323686 | **www.soundpad.co.uk** | **info@soundpad.co.uk**

SINCE 1972 — **Service Second to None** Online & Instore

dpd NEXT DAY BEFORE NOON — **DPD Next Day Delivery** Available in the UK

Take it away V12 Retail Finance — **Finance Available Online** Call for more details

Featured..

PRS SE Custom 24
Overall good condition (more photos online). Fantastic tone and playability. Comes with a padded PRS Gig Bag.

PRS SE Custom 24 Floyd Rose
Excellent condition. Finished in the beautiful Flamed Amethyst. Fitted with the PRS Floyd Rose style Tremolo. With PRS padded gig bag

Fender American Pro Jazzmaster
Michael Frank Designed Single Coil Pickups. Mustang style saddles. Deep C Neck. Bone Nut. With Elite Moulded Hard Case.

Fender 1962 Precision Bass
Rare & Collectable. C Neck Shape. Original Parts. More information online, with multiple photos.

Fender American Vintage '59 Strat
Period correct '59 Stratocaster. Featuring D shaped neck. Mint green pickguard. Alder body. With Deluxe Hard Case.

Fender FSR Classic 69 Telecaster
Pink Paisley. Made in Japan. Fender Special Run. Slim C Neck. Vintage Style Single Coil Pickups. Classic Finish!

Fender AmericanStandard Stratocaster
Special Offer Finished in Bordeaux Metallic Red. Custom Shop Fat '50s Pickups. Modern C Neck. With Hard Case.

Fender Classic Player Jaguar Special HH
Finished in Olympic White. New Hotter Pickups with fatter tone. Multiple improvements. With Fender Gig Bag.

Ibanez RG970-WQMZ
Wizard 5pc Wenge/Bubunga Neck. Quilted Maple Top. Basswood Body. Jumbo Frets. DiMarzio Pickups.

Epiphone Ltd Ed '1939' Electar Century
Limited Edition Combo Amplifier. Inspired by the 1939 Century Amp. 18 watt all valve. 12" Electar Speaker. Fantastic condition.

Fender Mustang GT 100
100 watt Wifi equipped Digital Amplifier. Featuring Modelling of Fenders classic amplifiers. Bluetooth. 12" Speaker. Free Fender App.

Mesa Boogie F50 Combo
50 watt Class A/B Valve amplifier. Two channels with reverb. Fantastic condition. Comes with Padded Cover.

Boss ACS Live
Acoustic Singer Live. 60 watt bi-amp design with 6.5" speaker. Built in Looper, Harmony and Effects. USB output for recording.

Gretsch G5120T Electromatic
Finished in Gretsch orange. Upgraded Bone Nut, low resistance Graphtech Bridge saddles and Grover Machine heads. Hiscox Hard Case

Fender Am Pro Telecaster Deluxe
Finished in Sonic Grey. Rosewood Fingerboard. Shawbucker Humbucking pickups. Deep C neck. Comes with Hard Case.

Fender American Pro Stratocaster HH
Finished in Black. Rosewood Fingerboard. Featuring 2x Shawbucker Humbucking pickups. Deep C Neck. Comes with Hard Case.

Sandberg California VS
4 String Bass. Finished in Sunburst. 6 Bolted Hardrock maple Neck. Split coil output pickups. Fantastic quality.

Fender American 'The Edge'
U2's 'The Edge' Signature Stratocaster. Featuring DiMarzio FS-1 Bridge Pickup, and Fat 50s Mid & Neck Pickup. Hard Case.

Rickenbacker 360/12 Mapleglo
Deluxe Hollow Body with a special contoured body. Rosewood Fingerboard with Triangular Inlays. Made in USA. With Hard Case.

Rickenbacker 620/6 Mapleglo
Deluxe Hollow Body with a special contoured body. Rosewood Fingerboard with Triangular Inlays. Made in USA. With Hard Case.

The Heritage H150CM
Made in Gibson's old Kalamazoo Factory in 2001. Featuring Seymour Duncan '59 Humbuckers. Perfect Condition. Hard Case.

Fender 'The Strat' 1980
Very collectable. Some say the ultimate stratocaster! 9 pickup combinations. X1 Bridge Pickup. Great condition. More photos online.

Yamaha AEX1500
Martin Taylor Model. Made in 2004. Fantastic condition. Natural Blonde Gloss finish. Floating Humbucker & Piezo System. Case.

Suhr Classic T Pro
John Suhr designed guitar. Fantastic condition. Featuring Lola Neck Pickup. Alder Body. Rosewood Fretboard. With Hard Case.

DIY WORKSHOP

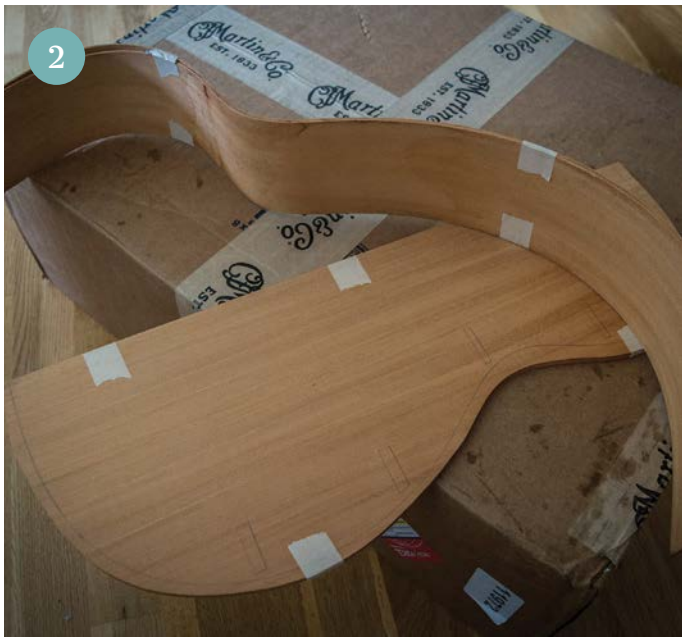
MARTIN GUITAR KIT BUILD

PART ONE

For those who are unafraid to go down the DIY route, Martin Guitar Kits provide an affordable way to own a little slice of Nazareth. But how straightforward is it to build your own acoustic? **HUW PRICE** finds out...

The ground floor of Martin's old North St factory is now the home of Guitarmaker's Connection, where the Guitar Kits are put together. The kits are assembled from production parts that fail quality control due to minor cosmetic defects, but ours didn't have any obvious blemishes

1
EST. 1833



All the way back in 2001, I built my first ever acoustic guitar from a Martin Guitar Kit – long (very long!) time readers might even remember that the process was chronicled in the pages of this very magazine at the time. I'm happy to say that it's still going strong today, and is now in the hands of *The Guitar Magazine*'s Chord Clinic guru, Rod Fogg. Every time I play it since I handed it on, however, I come away kicking myself for letting him talk me into selling it – it's matured into a gorgeous sounding guitar. On the plus side, Rod is putting it to much better use that I could anyway...

Since then I've built two further acoustics – another Martin 000 kit for my niece and a 12-fret slot head kit from Stewart-MacDonald. The 12-fret didn't turn out particularly well but, having been dragged from the dry heat of LA through the freezing winters of Chicago to the humidity of New York, that second Martin kit has acquired the tone and road weary grace of a fine vintage acoustic.

Clearly then, Martin's Guitar Kits can produce excellent results – some might consider it cheating, but if you only plan to build one or two acoustic guitars in your lifetime, a kit is a sensible choice. Much of the highly skilled stuff is done for you, and there's no need to invest in specialist tools such as bandsaws, side bending irons, thickness planers and router templates.

I believe that with a bit of ingenuity and patience, anybody can assemble one of these kits, using ordinary hand tools for the most part. Some procedures do require specialist equipment, but we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Granted, experience and expertise may be needed to achieve a truly professional finish, but there's no reason why your kit guitar can't sound superb. After all, we're talking about an acoustic made from all-solid tonewoods – so what could possibly go wrong?

The Kit

Much has changed since I assembled that first Martin Guitar Kit all those years ago. Back then I ordered a 000 kit with rosewood back and sides. Although that particular kit is still available to US customers, Martin can no longer export rosewood kits due to increasingly stringent CITES regulations.

This time I'm building an 000 with mahogany back and sides. In Martin nomenclature, it's the International Mahogany 000 24.9 Guitar Kit and has a list price of $400 plus shipping. You can find it, along with Martin's dreadnought, OM and jumbo Guitar Kits in the Guitarmaker's Connection section of the 1833 Shop on www.martinguitar.com.

My first kit also came with a rosewood peghead veneer, an ebony fingerboard and an ebony bridge. Understandably, the rosewood veneer is no longer included and both this kit's fingerboard and bridge are Richlite rather than wood. The peghead overlay and the V-shaped infill for the tail block join are synthetic, too – probably some sort of shiny black plastic or fibreboard, but it's hard to tell.

The top seems to be of higher quality than what came with the previous kits, with fairly straight and tight grain lines and lots of cross silking. So this should look pretty fine with some finish applied. I also like the side ears that Martin leave in the waist area, because you can dangle the top from your fingers to test the tap tone. This one produces a very encouraging note – 16 cents flat of a G natural according to the tuner app on my phone.

Both my previous Martin kits arrived with the rosette channels

1 **The kit arrives in a box roughly the size of a small combo, and contains all the key bits you'll need to build your own acoustic**

2 **It features solid mahogany parts with pre-bent sides and back plates that will need to be joined**

3 **The top's grain is straight and fairly tight, with a strong and clear tap tone that bodes well**

4 The Rosette is pre-installed and the herringbone is a classy touch

5 Most of the parts are bagged or bundled together like these back braces, so sort through the packaging carefully to find everything

6 The brace positions are clearly marked on the back of the soundboard and this looks like a modern back-shifted X pattern

7 The pre-carved neck is solid mahogany, the pre-slotted fingerboard is Richlite and there's a two-way truss rod encased in plastic

pre-cut but unfilled. This kit turned up with fibre strips and herringbone pre-installed. The factory has done a very fine job but I have mixed feelings. Although I do like herringbone, I hadn't planned to use it on this guitar, but it's something I can very easily live with.

The kit binding is black, with an accompanying length of black/white/black purfling. Martin's fretwire comes supplied in a neat roll so all the pre-radiusing is done for you. When the kit arrives, you must be sure to sift through the contents carefully, because the box is packed with shredded newspaper to keep things protected. Many of the parts are quite small and some are hidden away – taped between cardboard sheets for protection.

Although the kit doesn't include a full-sized blueprint or step-by-step instructions, there is a charming and very useful guide booklet penned by Martin's archives custodian and museum curator, Dick Boak. This booklet is full of practical advice and tips for your build, so study it well and take particular care to examine the parts list on the back page. All the brace positions are clearly marked on the top and back plates.

The book also has a scale drawing showing where to locate the tuner post holes on the headstock, and quite by chance I found a full-sized body outline drawn onto one piece of cardboard packaging. I reiterate – thoroughly check that you've found all the bits and cross reference against the parts list before you throw all that paper in the recycling. But do keep the empty box because it's the perfect place to store everything while you're working.

I can't speculate on the style of neck that usually ships with this kit, but I requested something chunky – preferably with a V profile – and I couldn't be happier with this neck. It's carved from a single piece of mahogany and it's almost the finished article.

I'll need to finesse the diamond volute at the back of the headstock, remove the excess width and feather it into the edge of the fingerboard. The fingerboard comes shaped and pre-slotted for frets, along with all the holes for the pearl position marker dots.

The tuners are Martin-branded die-cast chrome types with small buttons, and they're bagged up with the nut and saddle blanks, plastic bridge pins and a packet of Martin strings. There's everything you need to build a Martin-style acoustic, but don't be fooled into thinking this is a weekend job. Although much of the work has been done for you by Martin, the challenges of jointing the back and setting the neck still lie ahead. Better get cracking.

Developing moulds

One of the problems facing all acoustic guitar builders is the >

WANTED

DEAD OR ALIVE

CASH REWARD

OLD AND VINTAGE GUITARS & EQUIPMENT BOUGHT, SOLD AND TRADED

IF CAPTURED, PLEASE DELIVER TO:

OLD HAT GUITARS
47 East Street, Horncastle,
Lincolnshire, LN9 6AA
Tel: 01507 525327
07850 802 219
www.oldhatguitars.com

8 The centre line and body outline are traced onto a backing board

9 A set square is used to ensure that this mould block is glued onto the backing board square to the centre line

10 The sides fit snugly into the mould and conform very closely with the body outline on the backing board

11 This time the set square confirms that the sides are square to the base

12 Construction begins with gluing the heel and tail blocks and clamping with various sized clamps

need to maintain a symmetrical body shape with square sides throughout. Check out any one of the Martin factory visit videos online and you'll see that the company has always used body moulds for this purpose. They're pretty simple in concept and easy enough to make if you have a band saw and a spindle sander.

The key word there is 'if', because I've previously attempted to make moulds using a jigsaw and the results were less than satisfactory. Besides which it was both time consuming and hard work. For this project, I decided to try something different.

Regular readers will remember the Gretsch Anniversary restoration I did recently, and for that project I created a body former. Since I was removing the top, I wanted to ensure that the body would retain its shape while it was dismantled. The former worked perfectly – so much so that when I glued the top back on, the sides hadn't even moved a fraction of a millimetre over the course of a year.

I decide on the same approach for this acoustic, however with the Gretsch I simply glued blocks tight against the sides of the guitar. This time I have to establish a centre line on the backing board and then draw the guitar's outline onto the board before gluing the blocks.

The only reference provided for the body outline is drawn out on a piece of packing cardboard. Rather than attempt to cut this with a craft blade and risk messing it up, I copy the outline onto tracing paper and cut out the shape with scissors.

With the tracing paper carefully positioned on the centre line, I mark out one side of the body then flip the paper over to draw the other side. Martin specs state that 000-sized bodies are supposed 19.38 inches long, but this outline ended up just 0.05 inches longer. I figure that's close enough and drew lines at right angles to the centre line at the end points.

From a piece of 1.5 by 2.5-inch planed timber I then cut 12 blocks – 10 two inches long and two four inches long. The four-inch blocks are then carefully aligned on the end lines and the remaining two-inch blocks are glued at spaced intervals around the body outline.

Before gluing these blocks, I use a set square to establish which of the planed surfaces forms the best right angle. This is important because in addition to establishing the body shape, these blocks are intended to hold the sides square. This type of mould is cheap and easy to make, and it takes me less than two hours all in.

Fitting in

Unlike some other kit parts, Martin's sides – or rims – are pre-tapered. This means they are flat on the top but the back surfaces gradually narrow from

the waist to the neck block area – where an acoustic guitar's body depth is at its minimum. Be sure to establish which one is which, because the heel block has up and down sides.

At this stage, the upper edges of the rims should face downwards in the mould and you'll know when you have it right because they'll be flat against the outline board all around the edges. If they're touching the board at the tail block end but floating above it at the neck block end, they're the wrong way around.

Although the pre-bent sides have relaxed somewhat, once I have the edges butted up and clamped on the centre line at the neck end, they require very little persuasion to conform to the outline. In fact, clamps on each side at the blocks adjacent to the tail block are all that's needed. There's a gap of exactly 0.5 inches at the tail, but that's where an inlay strip will end up later in the build. Taking my set square all around the sides, everything looks straight and true.

Sticky moments

Now for the exciting part – the first bit of assembly, gluing the heel and tail blocks to the sides. The tail block is oversized, so I mark the correct length and cut off the excess leaving it a tiny bit proud for insurance. The neck block is over-sized, too, but I'll deal with that later.

When restoring my Gretsch, I particularly enjoyed using hide glue for the first time. Is it the optimum adhesive for tone? The big guys charge extra for it and it was used throughout the vintage era. For this reason I've decided to use it here wherever possible.

One difficulty with hot hide glue is that you need to work quickly, because it grabs fast and you need to clamp up while the glue is still hot. It's important to be well prepared and that means marking out where you want the parts to end up, devising a clamping strategy, and having a couple of practice runs.

With the exact positions of the heel and tail blocks drawn onto the template board, I apply clear plastic packing tape to the template blocks and the template board. Tape is needed to ensure that the blocks stick only to the rims and not the mould. While the glue was coming up to temperature (60°C) I heat the tail block with a hairdryer, as theoretically the open time will be extended if the glue is applied to a hot surface.

Even so, I have to apply the glue, position the block and clamp it all within a minute. It's certainly more stressful and challenging to use this type of glue, so if you're new to this [or a vegan, for that matter! – Ed] I'd suggest using Titebond Original instead. Either way, leave everything clamped up overnight and don't stress the joints for 24 hours. That's probably enough stressful gluing for one month, don't you think?

NEXT MONTH...

Check in next month as Huw fixes the kerfing and braces, before gluing the body of his 000 together

To advertise, call **Joe Supple +44 (0) 1225 489987**

TOUCHSTONE TONEWOODS

Musical Instrument Makers' and Repairers' Supplies

The best source for guitar parts, wood, materials, tools and plans

Order on our website

We specialize in quality wood for making musical instruments. See our website for all the guitar parts and spares you need.

Albert Road North, Reigate, RH2 9EZ
Tel: 01737 221064

www.touchstonetonewoods.co.uk

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN
Rob Williams Guitars

Professional guitar building
Repairs & restorations

01686 689120
www.robwilliamsguitars.co.uk
www.facebook.com/robwilliamsguitars

VINCE CHALMERS GUITAR CENTRE
9 ALBERT STREET, DUNDEE DD4 6NS EST. 1972

D'Aquisto New Yorker Special 1980 s/b ex/condition a great player with a sound to match very rare.....P.O.A.
Gibson Citation 2005 blonde near mint a stunning rare model top off the range with custom case and certificate.....£13,950
Fender Blues Deluxe Tweed as new.....£495
Gibson Chet Atkins Country Gent 1996 orange ex/condition.....£2750
Fender Strat.s/b 1983 (62 reissue) ex/condition great player and sound.....£1295
Zenith Arch Top non-cut 1958 with Kent Armstrong Pick Up.....£495
Gibson 335 Dot Custom 2012 light burst nice flame nr. mint.....£2250
Gibson L4CES 89 vintage s/b excellent condition original case.....£3500
Contreras Double Top 1982 Spruce double top amazing sound.....P.O.A.
Sitar double gourde concert model 1960s.....£495
D'Aquisto New Yorker DQ-ALB Almondburst near mint with case and cert.....£2250
Peerless Wizard slim acoustic arch top with (3) P90 Pick-ups as new good flame.....£795

WEBSITE: WWW.CHALMERSGUITARS.CO.UK : TEL: 01382 457642 or 810988
Email: vincechalmers@hotmail.co.uk

JAG
John Anthony Guitars

Cayton, Scarborough
North Yorkshire
England
01723 586822

BAYTONE

BEAUTIFUL, HAND BUILT GUITAR PICKUPS

GUITAR MAKING PLANS AND PRODUCTS

PARTS AND RESOURCES
BESPOKE GUITARS
REPAIRS AND CUSTOMISATION

www.johnanthonyguitars.com

Beginner to Boutique
One to One Service
Sensibly Priced
High Quality Used Guitars
Honesty and Integrity

Austin Guitars

Based in Kirkby, Liverpool, is a family run business dedicated to the provision of top quality new and used guitars.

Check out our latest arrivals at:
www.austinguitars.co.uk

Or email:
sales@austinguitars.co.uk

Keep up to date, follow us on Twitter:
@austinguitarsuk

Fast delivery nationwide

Showroom available by appointment

If you are looking to buy, sell or trade get in touch
0151 374 2459
07730 409 841

www.myguitars4u.com

My collection of Vintage Guitars, Basses & Amplifiers are for sale. Full details & photos on my website.

2005 Gibson Les Paul Standard, 2001 Gibson Firebird V, 1973 Fender Strat, 1997 PRS Custom 24 Ten Top Birds, 1977 Fender Jazz Bass Natural, 1977 Precision Bass are just some of the guitars on my website all fully set up.

www.myguitars4u.com
Tel: 07889 912921

GUITARCOLLECTIVE.CO.UK

WE BUY AND SELL QUALITY USED GUITARS

Visit our website for up-to-date stock
www.guitarcollective.co.uk

Tel: 07963 154845

All about... Machineheads

Tuners come in many shapes and sizes, but having a good, stable set is absolutely essential if you have any plans to stay in tune. **HUW PRICE** rounds up the key things you need to know before picking your pegs...

Stringed instruments have been around far longer than mankind has had the capability to produce complicated metal mechanisms. Even back then they had to be tuned up, however, and used non-geared tuners known as 'friction pegs'. Although their use on guitars is confined to staunch flamenco traditionalists, the term 'peghead' is a vestige of this once common practice.

The operating principle is simple enough, with a tapered wooden peg wedged into a hole in the headstock. The key would be at the rear and the end of the peg would protrude through the front. The end of the peg would be drilled for a string to be threaded through and the friction fit of the peg in the hole would be sufficient to resist the string pull and maintain pitch.

Despite the inaccuracy and notorious tuning instability, friction pegs remain de rigeur for the violin family of instruments and attempts to update it still face fierce resistance. In the guitar world, however, this has never been a subject of any real debate, because friction tuners would be totally unusable with the extra tension of steel strings and the demands presented by string bending and tremolo systems.

A tuner with a higher ratio provides a greater degree of tuning precision

The first geared metal tuners date to the mid-1700s and some credit the earliest design to John Frederick Hintz. An English guitar maker called John Preston also has a claim with his system of tuning bolts and hooks. However, the tuners we use today are quite different.

You can call them machineheads, tuning pegs, tuning gears or just plain tuners, but regardless of name or outward appearance, all modern types operate in pretty much the same way. A tuner post – or capstan – is attached to the centre of a pinion gear. The pinion gear then meshes with a worm gear with a knob or button at one end that allows this key to be turned by hand.

With a properly functioning tuner, the gears are tightly meshed together so the string pull cannot force the tuner post to move. It will only turn when the worm gear is rotated. In contrast to earlier styles, friction is undesirable and to ensure

The six-in-a-box tuners on vintage Silvertones work backwards

smooth operation, the tuner shaft passes through bushings that are press-fitted into the face of the guitar's headstock.

The Golden Ratio

The use of gears means that all tuners have a ratio – ie the number of 360-degree turns of the tuner button required to make the tuner post rotate a full 360 degrees. With friction tuners, the ratio is 1:1, which is as crude as it gets and precision tuning is therefore extremely difficult.

Vintage Kluson tuners had a 14:1 ratio but modern tuners, including vintage reissues – tend to be 18:1, 19:1, 28:1 or even higher. Graph Tech's Ratio set of tuners has ratios optimised for each and every string and range from 12:1 to 39:1 with the lowest ratio used for the top E and the highest ratios used for the low E and G strings.

A higher ratio provides a greater degree of precision, which in this era of super accurate electronic tuners is a massive help. The only real downside of high ratios is that it takes longer to reach concert pitch when you are fitting fresh strings, but if you use a string winder tool it hardly matters.

Open Or Closed?

Look at classical guitars and many vintage acoustics and electrics, and you'll find the tuning gears are clearly visible. For obvious reasons these are known as open-gear tuners. Some formed the opinion that this type of tuner was somehow inferior and old fashioned, however this view has largely been discredited.

Many now regard open-gear Waverly and Rodgers tuners as being among the very finest tuners being made, but they are extremely expensive. If you like the vintage looks but need something more affordable, check out Grover, Gotoh, Wilkinson and Schaller open-gear offerings. They look the part and perform to a high standard. Shertler and Hipshot also offer open-gear tuners, but with a more modern styling.

One of the perceived problems with open gears was a tendency to collect dirt and grime. When the grease or oil on the gears became contaminated, the tuners would stiffen up or even seize completely. They could look pretty grotty, too, so manufacturers such as Kluson began fixing covers over the gears to protect them and refine the appearance. These are known as closed-back tuners.

The sheer number of ancient closed-back tuners still providing good service on vintage guitars is testament to the effectiveness of the design. However, the gear lubricant packed under the covers can deteriorate over time and covered tuners can end up with the same issues as open-gears unless properly maintained.

This led tuner manufacturers to introduce sealed tuners – aka die-cast tuners. Here the gear mechanism is completely sealed within an enclosure and therefore protected from contamination. Such tuners can maintain top performance for decades and require no maintenance.

So many vintage Gibsons ended up with Grovers and Schallers replacing the factory fitted Klusons it has become almost as acceptable as a re-fret to collectors. However, many were converted back again as it became more widely understood that the original tuners were just fine and the causes of most tuning stability issues lay elsewhere.

Getting Shafted

Tuner posts – or shafts – differ in diameter, shape and design. The earliest geared tuners would have been installed in slotted headstocks, so there would have been no bushings. The shaft would therefore rotate within a hole drilled into the inside edge of the string slot, so the tuner shaft's diameter would have been even along its entire length. Tuners for slot heads remain the same to this day.

Things changed when manufacturers took to solid headstocks. To keep the string wraps tightly clustered and solid, the shafts were narrowed around the string hole. Everybody has their preferred method of attaching strings and whether you like to knot or merely wrap is up to you. However, Fender came up with a new method.

The style of Klusons fitted to Fenders of the 50s and 60s have shafts that are split at the top with a hole drilled through the centre. The idea is to cut the string to length then push the end down the centre and fold it over to exit the split in the shaft. This works an absolute treat – unless you're using round-core strings – and the string is secured securely and neatly.

During the late 1970s Sperzel introduced the first locking tuners and they have since become commonplace. The design has a thumbscrew on the back of the gear casing that tightens a clamp that's built into the shaft. This eliminates the need for multiple wraps or knots around the post. Simply align the string hole with the string path, >

NEED VALVES?

"Bring Back The Power!"

Restore the vitality and sparkle to your guitar amplifier with a new set of valves.

For your new preamp and power valves, visit:

www.ampvalves.co.uk

Ampvalves

Unit 12 Tilbury Close
Caversham, Reading
Berks. RG4 5JF

Tel: 07979 687404

pass the string through the hole, tension the string by hand then tighten the thumbwheel to clamp it. You can then tune up and you will probably find the string is only wrapped a quarter turn around the post when it reaches the correct pitch.

One potential downside of locking tuners is that wrapping the string down the shaft is an effective method of finessing the break angle over the nut. This is why Sperzel and others have staggered tuner posts. So rather than have six matching shaft heights, they taper to provide optimum break angles without the need to post wrap – which some consider a potential cause of tuning instability.

Tuners & Tone

Besides the appearance, the main difference between die-cast tuners and vintage-style closed tuners or open-gears it their extra weight. This can affect the balance of a guitar, especially when die-cast tuners are combined with a lightweight body, as many SG and Firebird owners will know all too well.

Increased headstock mass is also considered to have an impact on tone, although the effect is often disputed. Even so, some believe that a heavy set of tuners can increase sustain, but others argue there's no difference.

The weight of die-cast tuners can affect the balance of a guitar, especially with a lightweight body

Paul Reed Smith is a well-known advocate of light tuner sets – arguing that heavy tuners subdue a guitar's dynamics. Either way, if tuners do have an influence on tone, it's more likely to be on the liveliness and dynamic response rather than the sound, per se.

Automatic Tuners

Just when we thought tuner technology had evolved about as far as it could, along came automatic tuning systems with motorised machine heads. It had been a long-held pipe dream for guitar designers and eventually the technology caught up with the concept. At least that's how things appeared on the surface.

First, a company called AxCent developed a self-tuning system and even had Jimmy Page as an endorser. However, the tech required irreversible modifications to the guitar. Later on, Trevor Wilkinson got in on the act with the ATD 440, but that features motorised tuners built into a bridge. Then there's the Tronical/Gibson Min-ETune – a system that clamps onto the back of a headstock. It was used widely through the Gibson 2015 range, and is still available on some of its guitars today.

For whatever reasons, none of these automatic tuning products have really caught on with the guitar playing community at large. We have seen the future and frankly, it can be a bit fiddly and inconsistent. Long live the machinehead and a good set of ears.

Closed-back tuners were introduced to stop dirt and grime getting into the gears and make them more reliable

READERS' FREE ADS

Email your ad and picture (put 'FREE ADS' in the subject line) to **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com** 28 WORDS MAXIMUM

Fane 1960s 12" Fane speakers, two, both identical each rated at 25 watts/15 ohms. Good condition for age. £50 for both, no offers tel Tim 07821 113479 Hyde, Cheshire

Fender Custom Shop '51 Nocaster Limited Edition, matching serial numbered Nacho Banos book, OHSC, candy, COA, blonde £2,750. Call Colin 07885 48870 steeleman64@aol.com, Essex

Gordon Smith Gypsy, semi-solid, red, hard case, £750. Colin 07885 48870 steeleman64@aol.com, Essex

Gibson Custom Shop '57 Les Paul Junior, single-cut, VOS, 2010, cert, candy, OHSC, cherry, excellent condition £2,000. Call Colin 07885 48870 steeleman64@aol.com, Essex

Selmer Treble & Bass, 500-watt valve guitar amp. Well-used but in full working order. No timewasters. £300ono Tel Tim 07821 113479

WEM Dominator, 70s model, excellent cond, killer sound! £350. Call Bob Sawyer, 07879 265019 Herts

WEM Clubman Mk8, 1x12, £275; Dominator Mk2 1x12, £350; ER40 transistor head and matching 2x12 speakers, £220; Songbird combo, £60. Lancaster, 0777 327 6815

Rickenbacker 360/6, Mapleglo, home use only, near-new condition, Ricky case, £1,500. melmccorry@btinternet.com. Bath/Bristol area

Mesa/Boogie Mark V-35 combo, 2 channels, 6 modes, EQ and solo. As new condition £1,350. Phone 07516 555391 Cumbria

Gibson Custom Shop 57 Les Paul Junior single-cut VOS 2010 made, cert, candy, OHSC, Cherry, excellent condition £2,000 Colin 07885 48870 steeleman64@aol.com, Essex

The Guitar Magazine

IS NOW ON YOUTUBE!

HEAD TO YOUTUBE.COM/THEGUITARMAGAZINE FOR THE HOTTEST NEW GEAR DEMOS

Chord Clinic

Diminished 7th chords are rare creatures in most forms of songwriting – **ROD FOGG** goes in search of the hairy nosed wombat of guitar chords...

Diminished 7th chords are seldom encountered in rock music, although they are more common towards the jazzy end of the spectrum. They're also blessed with some strange properties, which we'll take a look at as we go along. Figure 1 gets things started with four possible shapes of varying degrees of difficulty for an A♭ diminished 7th chord. In chord notation we can use either "dim" (A♭dim7) or a small circle (A♭o7) as an abbreviation for diminished. Technically the flattened third over A♭ is C♭ and the diminished 7th is G𝄫 (double-flat). We have opted to call these notes B and F as it can help to make the flexible nature of diminished chords more clear.

Each diminished 7th chord is its own self-contained bundle of tension, and as such can make an interesting intro or hiatus in a passage of music. Allow figure 2 to explain. Play this four-chord sequence around twice at a slow four-beat tempo and then play one of the chords from figure 1 and let it hang indulgently in the air for four beats. Repeat this pattern as often as you like taking the option to go for the diminished chord every time you reach the end of the sequence.

Figure 1

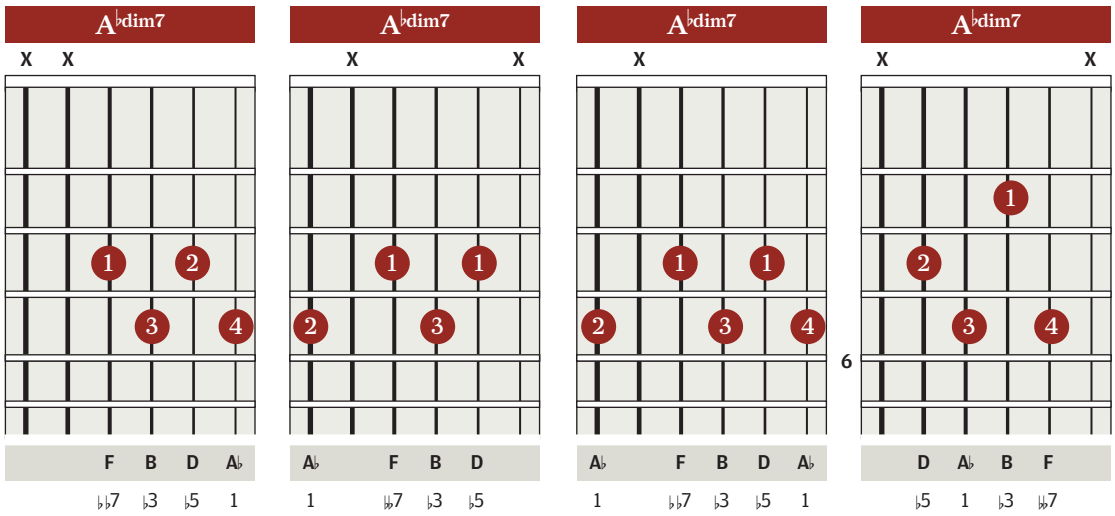


Figure 2

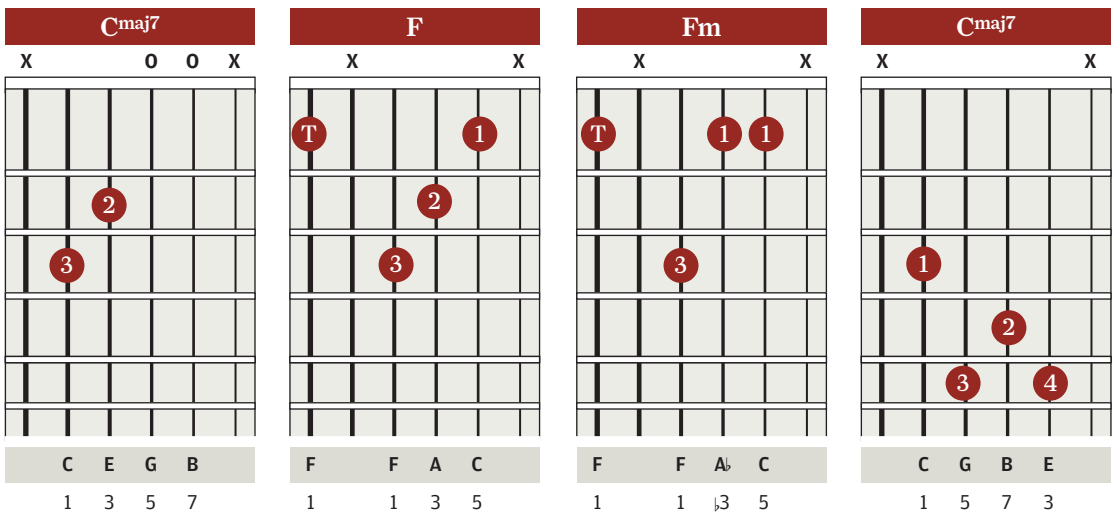


Figure 3

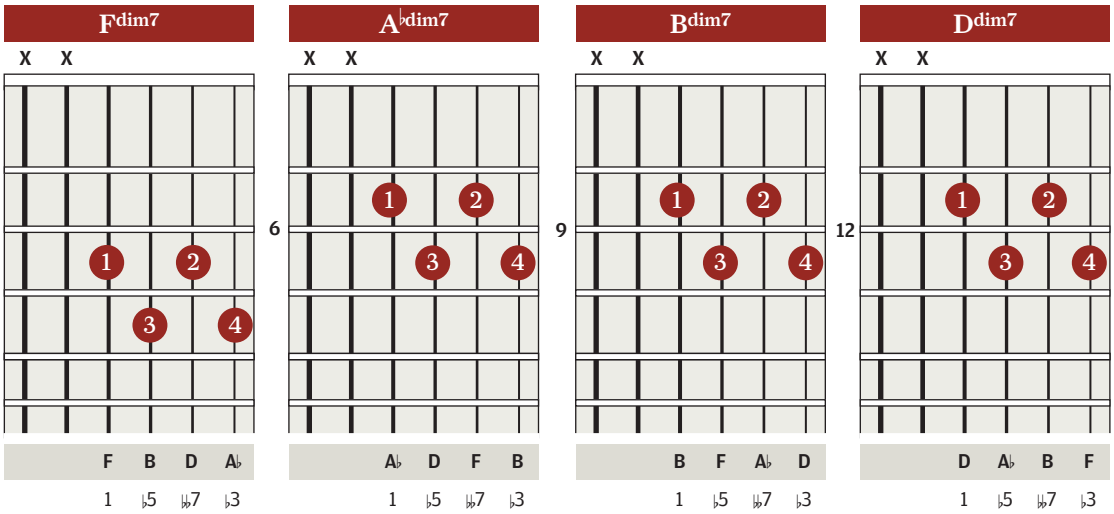
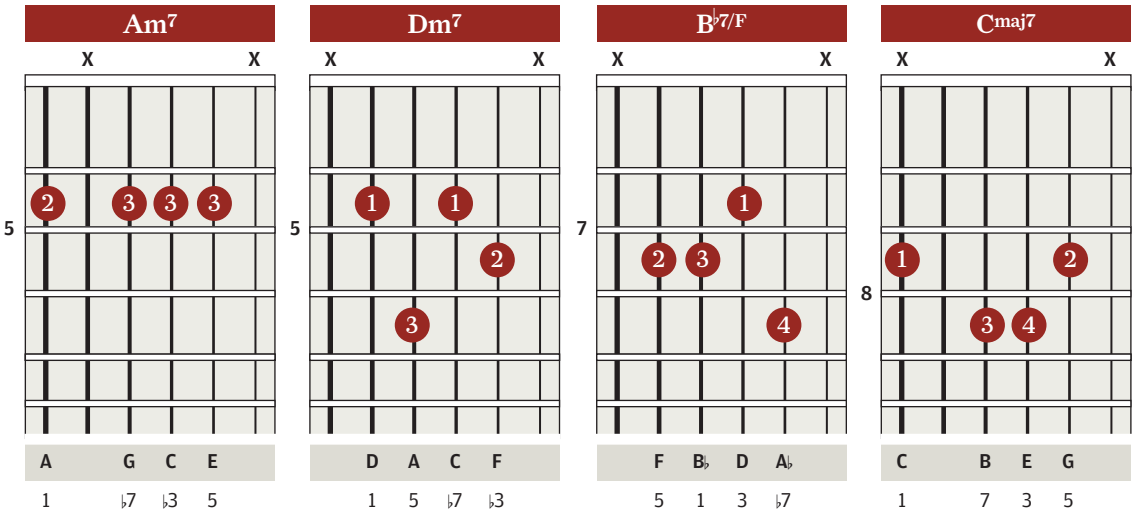


Figure 4



Each time it returns, the diminished chord's out-of-key quality seems to hold the music in a state of suspended animation.

Taking this idea further, figure 3 begins on the A♭dim7 chord from figure 1 but adds three additional inversions to the recipe, which allow you to slide your fingers up the guitar maintaining the same shape and playing a different chord on each beat of a four beat bar. This introduces one of those weird properties of diminished chords, in that you don't have to change shape to play the inversions of the chord.

Sound the alarm, there's a music theory moment approaching! So, an A♭ diminished chord consists of the notes A♭, B, D and F. Each of these notes is a minor third, (which is the same as three frets) away from the next. When you get to F, three frets up and you're back on A♭ again. So the same diminished chord recurs every three frets on the guitar; the notes are shuffled, but the chord remains

the same. This also means that any note in a diminished chord can be the root note; you can rename the chord each time, as we've done in figure 3, or alternatively, as all the chords have the same four notes, they could all be called A♭dim7.

Phew, glad that's over. What this song needs is a middle eight, or in this case, a middle four, which is provided by figure 4. Notice the use of minor 7th, slash chords and a major 7th chord. It's as if once you start using diminished chords you have to go with other extended chords to make everything feel at home. With figure 2 as our A section and figure 4 as our B section we can now play AABA and then retreat to the suspended animation of the diminished 7th chord from figure 1 or those from figure 3 for an extra bar at the end. Repeat ad libitum.

Figure 5 offers a few alternatives to the slash chord in figure 4. The first one sounds good without the note on the top string – technically that would make it "root omitted", but it will do a good job in context. Similarly, the B♭7/D chord is a bit of a stretch but it's a great voicing in this situation. The Bdim7 is another option, showing that sometimes a diminished chord can substitute for a dominant 7th.

Returning to our A section, figure 6 offers some extended alternatives to the chords in figure 2. Feel free to mix and match, but notice that we have opted to replace Fm7 with F♯dim7, mainly to demonstrate that diminished 7th chords can occasionally be used as substitutes for minor chords.

They're complex little creatures but used at the right moment a diminished 7th can lift a chord sequence out of the ordinary and add a hint of surprise, mystery and sophistication. Experiment and see what you can come up with – see you next month!

Figure 5

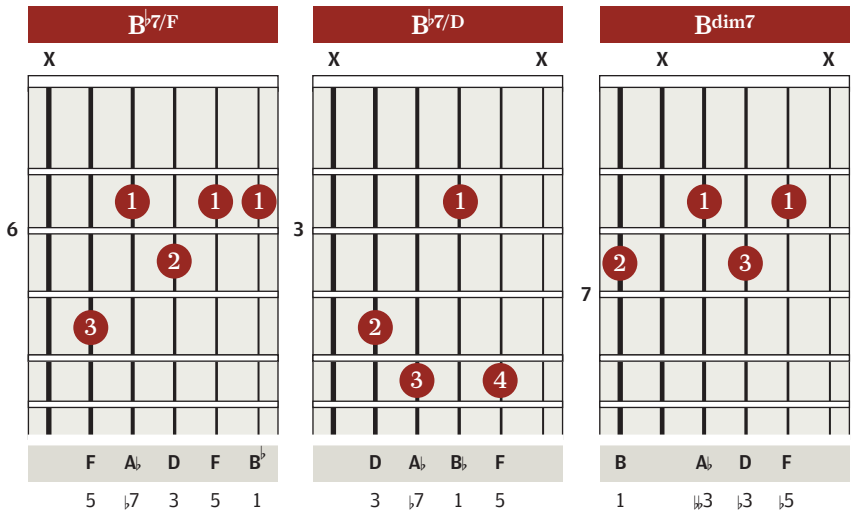
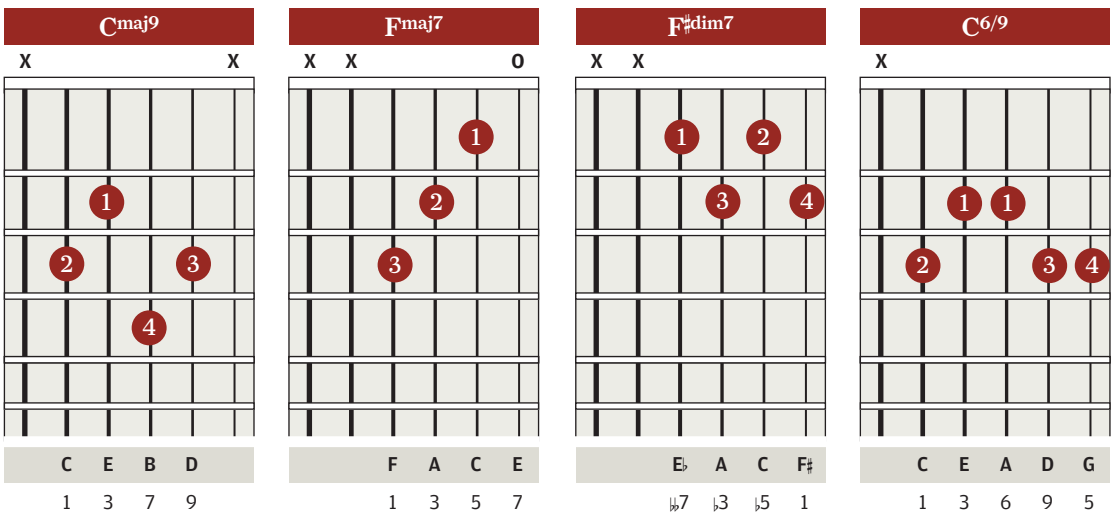


Figure 6



FROM THE MAKERS OF The Guitar Magazine

ON SALE NOW AT WHSmith

& OTHER REGULAR STOCKISTS WORLDWIDE

or buy online at **shop.anthem-publishing.com/all-products/guitar-bass-classics**

Kenny Wayne Shepherd

The Shreveport bluesman on short leads, racing cars, SRV's wisdom, and getting emotionally attached to your gear...

1 I couldn't live without my...
"That would be my 1961 Fender Stratocaster and it's just because from the moment I picked it up I knew that it was my guitar. It fit my hand perfectly, it sounded incredible and I have yet to find one that's better than that."

2 In another life I'd be...
"I always felt like I could have been a race car driver – I've always loved automobiles and I love to race cars in a controlled environment, so it would have definitely be something to do with cars."

3 The moment it all started...
"I feel like I had always really known that I was drawn to music in a unique way, but the moment I saw Stevie Ray Vaughan and met him when I was seven years old, it was just a life-changing moment. The way he played with such fire, intensity and passion, I wanted to do that same thing. I wanted to affect people like that through an instrument and from that day forward all I wanted to do was play guitar."

4 The one that got away...
"I've never sold, given away or lost any of my gear. I get attached to things so I've held on to everything I've ever had."

5 My Spinal Tap moment...
"When we were on tour with The Rolling Stones, my cable was probably only 30 feet long but their size of their stage is massive and I got a bit caught up in the moment and decided to take off running in one direction on the stage, and this is in front of 80,000 people, I was in a guitar solo and it was very heated... and then I yanked the cable right out of the guitar! So I had to scurry across the stage and try and find my cable and plug it back in and pretend like nothing ever happened..."

6 The best advice I've ever been given...
"The last time I saw Stevie Ray Vaughan was not long before he died, and he autographed my first Stratocaster and he put, 'To Kenny, just play it with all of your heart,' and that's been my approach to playing guitar my whole life, just play from the heart."

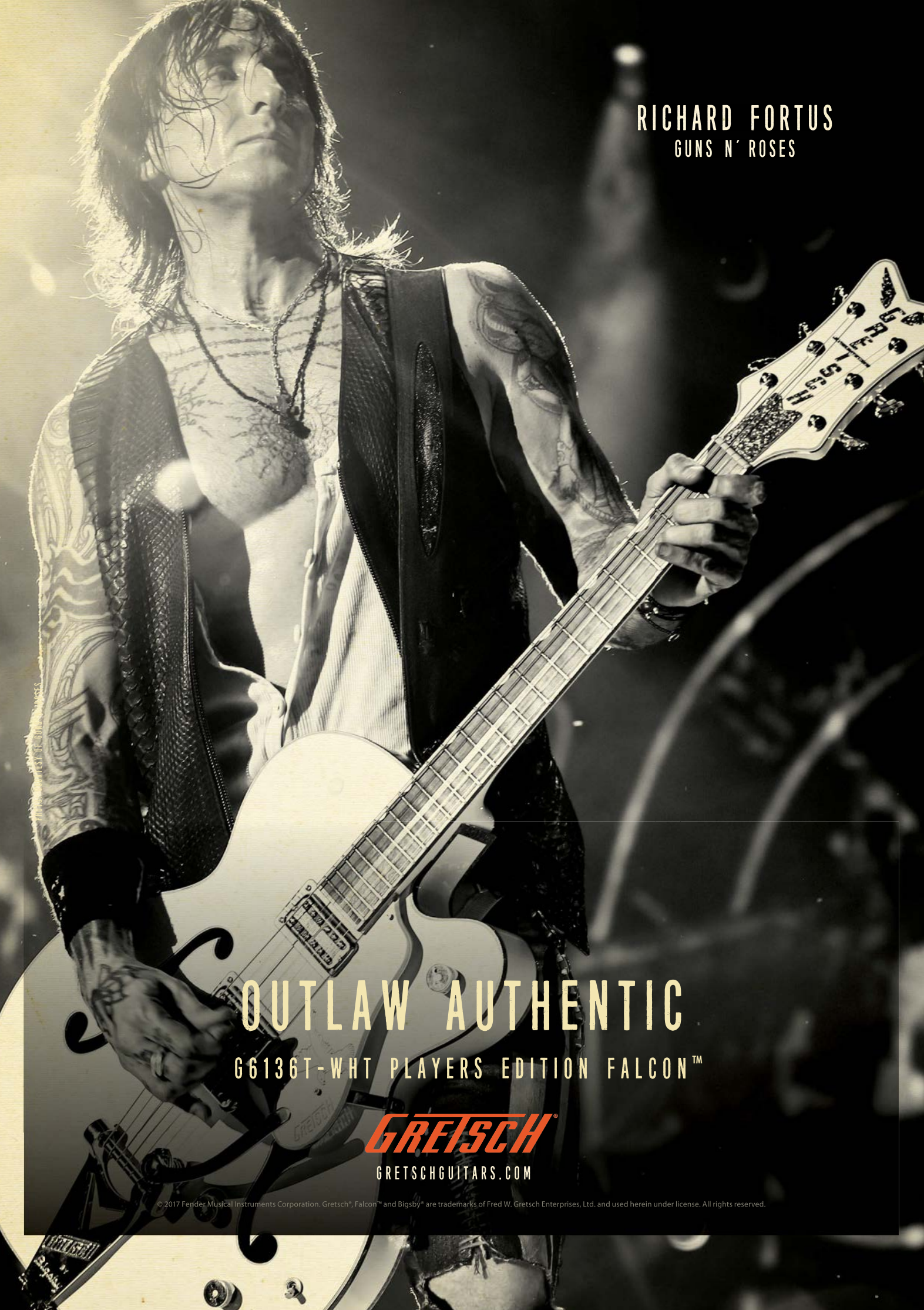
7 The first thing I play when I pick up a guitar...
"For me it's just kinda noodling, I don't have a go to song that I warm up with, I just try and play until my hands have been stretched out and ready to do the job."

8 The most important thing that's on my rider...
"Well at this point, it's Ricola throat lozenges – we always have those right before we go on stage because it's good for your throat for singing."

9 My guilty pleasure...
"I don't really have a lot of guilty musical pleasures any more, I only really listen to things that you would expect me to listen to. I listen to blues, I listen to rock 'n' roll, I'll listen to some jazz and swing music. I really like swing music and maybe people wouldn't expect that, I really like the 1920s sound, I just think it's fantastic."

10 If I could play one thing...
"I'd like to play *Eruption* by Van Halen. I've never sat down to try and learn to play it, but every time I hear it I think, 'Wow, you can't help but be impressed by that.'"

Kenny Wayne Shepherd's new album, *Lay It On Down*, is out now on Mascot/Provogue



© 2017 Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. Gretsch®, Falcon™ and Bigsby® are trademarks of Fred W. Gretsch Enterprises, Ltd. and used herein under license. All rights reserved.

The star® everyone's talking about.

"The Blackstar Artist 30 gives me amazing tube tone and the sonic options I need. From the studio to the stage or from the mountain to the cage, it always delivers. It manages to do everything an amp should do!"

Albert Hammond Jr. – The Strokes

Blackstar®
AMPLIFICATION

the sound in your head

Designed & Engineered
by Blackstar Amplification UK

Find your nearest dealer at
www.blackstaramps.com

The Guitar Magazine

THE JOY OF FX

• Star pedalboards • Hot new gear • Artist effects tips
• Builder profiles • Stompbox road tests & more...

STONE DEAF

EFFECTS & AMPLIFICATION

STONEDEAFFX.COM

Made in the United Kingdom

Perfectly Fusing Tone With Technology

Two notes

Le Preamp

series

Dual channel tube preamp

Guitar BEST BUY AWARD

Ever since Two notes launched the Torpedo C.A.B. professional speaker simulator pedal, our vision has always been to create the ultimate mobile gigging rig that could replace the feel and tone you get from a cumbersome tube amp setup. But to do that you need a great pedal preamp.

Well, with our **Le Clean**, **Le Crunch**, **Le Lead** and **Le Bass** tube preamps we're ready to give you the final piece to the portable tone puzzle.

Now warm and organic amp tones can literally live on *YOUR* pedal board, ready to rock wherever you are, night after night after night!

Two notes AUDIO ENGINEERING

www.two-notes.com

UK Distribution by the Audio Distribution Group / Filling Distribution alliance - **Building Brands Together**
sales@audiodistributiongroup.com

Audio Distribution Group | FILLING DISTRIBUTION

The Guitar Magazine

Anthem Publishing
Suite 6 Piccadilly House, London Road,
Bath BA1 6PL
Tel **+44 (0) 1225 489 984**
Email **theguitarmagazine@anthem-publishing.com**
www.theguitarmagazine.com

Editor **Chris Vinnicombe**
chris.vinnicombe@anthem-publishing.com
Art Editor **John Thackray**
john.thackray@anthem-publishing.com
Managing Editor **Josh Gardner**
josh.gardner@anthem-publishing.com
Contributors **Paul Gregory, Richard Purvis, Lars Mullen**

THE JOY OF FX

WINTER 2017

CONTENTS

KMA Audio Machines **04**
We chat to Enrico Preuß, founder of KMA Audio Machines, to find out why his pedals are making waves

Why I Love My **07**
Minus The Bear guitarist and loop-meister supreme Dave Knudson talks about his love affair with the Line 6 DL4

Review: Bigfoot Engineering **08**
We take a look at mini versions of the UK maker's King Fuzz, Thunder Pup and Trouble Booster

Review: Meris **10**
With Strymon and Line 6 pedigree, Meris are looking to make a mark with the Mercury 7 and Ottobit Jr

Dawner Prince Electronics **12**
We chat with Zoran Kraljevic about how the boutique Croatian firm ended up on David Gilmour's pedalboard

Test Pilots **14**
Paul Gregory continues his exploration of the Chase Bliss Audio Tonal Recall and discovers that the sky is the limit

Review: Strymon **16**
Not content with setting the bar for delay and reverb effects, Strymon takes a crack at one of the toughest nuts to crack – digital distortion and overdrive

Review: Keeley Electronics **17**
A few decades after it kicked off the boutique effects boom, we check out the latest iteration of Robert Keeley's Compressor pedal, the Compressor Plus

Elliot Randall **18**
We visit the house of Steely Dan guitar wizard and session legend Elliot Randall to explore his fantastic collection of old and new effects pedals

GET IN TOUCH

FACEBOOK
facebook.com/theguitarmagazine

YOUTUBE
youtube.com/theguitarmagazine

TWITTER
@guitarmagazine

INSTAGRAM
@theguitarmagazine

Or email **theguitarmagazine**
@anthem-publishing.com

SUBSCRIBE

Visit www.theguitarmagazine.com to take advantage of this month's special *The Guitar Magazine* subscription offer

Builder **Profile**

KMA AUDIO MACHINES

German pedal builder **Enrico Preuß** tells *The Guitar Magazine* about the growth of his company, KMA Audio Machines, pedal builds of convenience and the benefit of tolerant flatmates...

Q How did you first get in to building guitar effects pedals?

"It started when I joined my band, called Amplified Backdoor Creatures, and I needed new pedals for certain sounds and textures. To this end, I bought a lot of different pedals, but I wasn't really happy with most of the sounds I was getting, or the prices I was paying for what they were. At the time, I was studying mechanical engineering and my budget was pretty tight, so I decided to try out some DIY kits, and while waiting for the kits to arrive, I found stacks of info on the web talking about tagboard and vero layouts. That was the point where I dived into the whole pedal building universe. My first two self-built pedals were an SHO booster and the awesome Skreddy Pedals Screwdriver. I swapped the

germanium transistor with a silicon one, which gave me the sound I was looking for, and showed me that I could get everything that I wanted by doing it on my own."

Q When did that at-home tweaking become a proper effects-building company?

"Before I founded KMA Audio Machines, I did some one-off customs for friends and musicians that I met while I was on tour in summer 2014. It was such a fun to build pedals for other musicians and helping them to find their sound, I decided to start building effects as a real business, but it took another half a year to get it underway. The starting point was marked by building a Jordan Bosstone clone with a bias control and a wider frequency range. I called it the Fuzzly Bear, because after the mods, it was capable of getting both skinny distortion sounds and also nice thick and meaty fuzz tones. Karlowitsch, a close friend and an absolutely talented graphic designer, asked me if he could do a design for that pedal. I was so stoked about his approach that we decided to work together – he designed KMA's corporate look, programmed the website and in December 2014 we launched the brand. We did everything in my shared flat at the Karl-Marx-Allee in Berlin [hence 'KMA' – Ed], from populating the PCBs, silk-screening the enclosures and the product packages, drilling and testing the pedals and so on.

"I have to give a big thank you to my three flatmates for their understanding, because the silk-screening with solvent paint and testing the pedals at a decent volume wasn't the easiest thing to deal with! We got our very first dealer on Christmas eve, which was such an amazing thing, as we only launched the brand three weeks before. Since then, KMA Audio Machines has been growing and growing, moving to a real workshop, getting more and more dealers on board and with every new dealer, it has showed us that we are doing things right, releasing more and more pedals.

"It was such a fun to build pedals for other musicians and helping them to find their sound, I decided to start building effects as a real business"

KMA Audio Machines founder Enrico Preuß hard at work on his firm's next innovations

"It's strange to imagine that we started out almost three years ago with just one pedal and an initial production run of 10. Now we have over eight models in runs of 50 pieces at a time which sell really quickly. That is so amazing and we are so proud of where we are now, we have customers all over the planet! I never expected that we will get this far so quickly. I am pretty bad in being proud of what we've done, but as we got several reviews in different magazines I realised that it's time to being proud of what we achieved. But we have a long way to go still as we are only three people running the business currently. Wieland, the leader and drummer of my band, joined one year ago and our aim is to get all of us three in a paid full-time job. But honestly it is the greatest job I ever had and I love what we are doing."

Q Talk us through the current KMA Audio Machines pedal range...

"Well, our range consists of eight pedals right now. We have some really nice fuzz pedals like the Fuzzly Bear – a silicon-transistor-based pedal – and our tribute to germanium fuzzes is the Minos, which is a hybrid between a classic Tonebender MkII and a Supa-Fuzz. The Dead Stag is our fuzz/distortion hybrid that features a Red Army Overdrive-based circuit with an active three-band EQ section... it's like the most versatile Big Muff you can find. We recently added the Wurm distortion to our range – it's basically a Boss HM2, but even better. And I mean way better. We lowered the noise floor, improved the gain control and added two more EQ bands. Another new addition is the Astrospurt, a four-stage JFET phaser, that can also offer vibrato-like sounds or dial in a nice 'uni-vibe-ish' effect. The last current pedal in the line is the Moai Maea, which is a beast when it comes to analog octaving sounds."

Q What would you say sets KMA apart from other boutique pedal makers out there?

"I think it's the symbiosis of the artwork and the quality of our pedals on the one hand, and the versatility of each of our pedals on the other. We don't want to offer a pedal that's a one-trick pony, because I like to swap amps and guitars and I know that our users do that, too. So, we're always looking to add intuitive features and controls to offer a wide range of versatility – like the active EQ of the Dead Stag, or the footswitchable octave sections and mixing controls on the Moai Maea. Long story short – versatility with high quality handcrafting for modern musicians."

Q You also do custom pedal solutions for customers – what's the most unusual or tricky custom job you've had to handle?

"That's true, we did a lot of custom pedals, especially in the beginning of the company's history. I once got a request from a synthesizer player who wanted a stereo version of the Fuzzly Bear, with the gain controlled by a LFO, where the positive cycle modulates the gain of the left channel and the negative cycle modulates the gain of the right. It has different waveshapes, a peak detector and so on. That was a crazy project!"

Q What new products can we expect to see from KMA in the near future?

"Our next release is the Tyler – a signal splitter where one signal path has a variable low pass and the other has a variable high pass. Each signal path has a footswitchable effects loops to insert any pedal you like, followed by a mix control to bring both paths together. That means, you can split up your frequency range into highs and lows and do whatever you like with them and mix it back together, offering a nice and very nuanced sound, without overlapping frequencies. We'll also be launching a new germanium Rangemaster-style treble booster. We'll also introduce a voltage converter that will be fed with nine volts and delivers negative nine volts for old PNP transistor pedals, such as old fuzz pedals, and 18 volts for those that need it. Oh yes, next year we're also planning to come up with a delay, a harmonic tremolo and a reverb – so stay tuned!"

To find out more about KMA Audio Machines pedals, visit kma-machines.com

Why I love my...

LINE 6 DL4

By Dave Knudson – *Minus The Bear*

"The first time that I really used a Line 6 DL4 was when we were recording our *They Make Beer Commercials Like This* EP [2004], and we were writing *Fine + 2pts*. I had this little 'doodle-de-doo' pull-off thing, and rather than use the delay setting, I switched it over to the looper mode, then triggered it over some chords. I thought, 'That's cool!' and it kinda opened my ears.

"Back then I was listening to a lot of glitchy electronica, like Four Tet and Caribou – these things that are thrown into a computer and then manipulated that way. But it made me realise that if I had a couple of different DL-4 pedals, it didn't have to be as simplistic as the *Fine + 2pts* thing – I could achieve a similar stuttery, triggery, start-stop, backwards effect.

"From there, when we were writing *Menos El Oso* [2005], I wanted to see how far I could push it, and it took on its life of its own and got out of hand – it's become an instrument unto itself.

"The main reason that I love the DL4's looper function is because of the retriggering function that lets me do that really jittery, stuttery, one-shot stuff. There are a lot of other loopers out there, but because of the way the songs are written the re-triggering is a necessity – that one-shot, return to the beginning thing. Most of the loops I record on the fly either during the song or before it starts. I record them at half-speed and then take the loop speed up until it's normal time, double-time or whatever I need.

"As much as I love it, I do wish the DL4 had a couple more options – I wish you could store some loops in it without altering the way it works. That's why I have a Boss LoopStation on my board – for when I do something like the *Into The Mirror* or *Dr L'Ling* – ones that don't need to be retriggered as often, so I don't have to create it on the fly.

"But for me the best thing about the DL4 is that it's just a cool way to make your guitar sound like anything but a guitar, which is a fun space to be in – especially with this band."

Minus The Bear's latest album, *VOIDS*, is out now on Suicide Squeeze

BIGFOOT ENGINEERING
KING FUZZ MINI, THUNDER PUP MINI & TROUBLE BOOSTER MINI

These Bigfoot Mini pedals promise mammoth tones in a compact format... **RICHARD PURVIS** picks up the trail of three sonic beasts that don't leave a big footprint

According to American folklore, Bigfoot is a lumbering, ape-like beast that emerges from the darkness to strike fear into the hearts of all who see it – it reminds us of a few high-profile politicians we can think of... Over on UK shores, however, rather than skulking around in the woods and being hairy, Bigfoot builds effects pedals – and darned cool ones at that.

Not to be confused with US maker Bigfoot FX, the Herefordshire-based Bigfoot Engineering was founded by Rhys Stubbs in 2009, and the 'cottage industry' charm of these handmade pedals remains very much intact today. They combine quirky lo-fi looks with solid simplicity, and the latest additions to the range are baby versions of some of Bigfoot's favourite models.

King Fuzz Mini

Don't dawdle too long on this bit if you're already familiar with the standard King Fuzz – it's basically the same pedal, inspired by the vintage fuzz tones of Dan Auerbach of the Black Keys, but in a smaller enclosure. Mind you, when we say 'standard', there are actually six versions to choose from now – the variables being big or small, silicon or germanium, and one circuit or two.

They all have the same cutely bemused lion on the front as the biggun, though there's sadly no room for his tail in this format, and in each case your only controls are for gain and volume. That's right, no tone – the EQ response has been 'meticulously crafted to provide the perfect sweet spot every time', so if it doesn't sound right it must be your amp's fault.

Like all three pedals on test, this one is built to order (dispatch time is stated as seven to 10 days), and you can pick another colour if you've got something against this lovely yellow. You can also choose buffered or true bypass, but you can't choose to put a battery in this little thing – it's standard nine-volt power supply only.

Thunder Pup Mini

Instead of a lion, here we get a furious-looking dog, and it promises Plexi-style overdrive. The full-size Thunder Pup has two modes, 'big amp' and 'little amp', which are voiced along Marshall and Vox lines respectively; for the Mini version we get the big amp only, with Angus Young's searing rock tones cited as the prime influence.

Again the controls are just gain and volume, with nothing so frivolous as a tone knob, and again the colour is up to you – so don't read too much into the default green finish of our review sample. We may be expecting snarly mids, but this is no Tube Screamer clone.

Trouble Booster Mini

Now there's a great name for a treble booster that's maybe not as innocent as it seems. This pedal also comes in six different forms, including a passive version that claims to make your guitar louder without using any external power source, which must surely be witchcraft. The model we've been sent is built around a mains-powered germanium transistor.

The toggle switch at the top lets us flip between two circuits, and again Bigfoot cites specific guitar heroes as influences on the resulting tones: Brian May for the Top Boost-style 'bright' mode, and Billy Gibbons for the full-fat 'normal' mode.

In Use

Shall we dive right in? With gain at max, the King Fuzz Mini creates some truly massive sounds – this is an extra-rich chocolate mousse of fuzz, with none of the mids scooped out. Chords whoosh out in great sheets of bubbly noise, and over-the-top solo lines cut through with effortless clarity. Things never get unpleasantly ragged at the bottom end, and it's only when playing through the brightest of amps that we start wishing there was a tone control to smooth off the edgy attack a wee bit.

The King Fuzz Mini is an extra-rich chocolate mousse of fuzz, with none of the mids scooped out

We're equally impressed by how well this unit holds things together lower down the gain dial. The distortion is still sweet and sticky, yet retains a surprising amount of transparency and touch-sensitivity. It sounds good for chunky chords and even better for delicate lead playing, especially when you pull back the guitar's volume to around halfway.

While the limit of its gain range is set much lower, the Thunder Pup Mini actually has a lot in common with its feline friend. We get some of the same warmth and sweetness playing single notes, it's just as responsive to a softer right-hand touch; and while the sound is clearly tighter and more focused than the other unit, it's less coloured and less compressed than the average Plexi-inspired overdrive.

That means it isn't going to carry you all the way across the Atlantic if your starting point is an American-voiced amplifier, but it will give a tremendous push to a British amp that's already on the edge. It's pretty great at adding a 'crunch channel' to just about anything, in fact.

Our Trouble Booster lives up to its name a little too literally, sounding awesome on some days and rather nasty on others – an issue we're inclined to blame, at least in part, on the well-documented instability of germanium transistors. But it's a fine pedal when it's in the mood. In bright mode it nails the classic Rangemaster sound, adding as much honky midrange as it does genuine treble – perfect for tightening up the languid voice of an 18-watt Marshall for incisive riffage.

The 'normal' setting, meanwhile, really piles on the fat, fuzzy gain. Don't expect a true clean boost, though – there are farmers with cleaner wellies than anything you'll get out of this unit.

KEY FEATURES

Bigfoot Engineering King Fuzz Mini

- **PRICE** £129
- **DESCRIPTION** Fuzz pedal. Made in UK
- **CONTROLS** Gain, volume
- **FEATURES** Buffered or true bypass, powered by 9V PSU (not supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS** 112x60x27mm

The Guitar Magazine AWARD CHOICE 9/10

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Simple, in-yer-face vintage fuzz
+ Huge 'edge of losing it' tones
+ Surprisingly addictive with guitar volume backed off
– A tone control would have expanded this pedal's palette

A no-nonsense fuzz that sounds like a wall of junkshop amps turned up to 11

9/10

KEY FEATURES

Bigfoot Engineering Thunder Pup Mini

- **PRICE** £129
- **DESCRIPTION** Overdrive pedal. Made in UK
- **CONTROLS** Gain, volume
- **FEATURES** Buffered or true bypass (to order), powered by 9V mains supply only (not supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS** 112x60x27mm

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Pure, amp-like overdrive
+ Perfect for boosting an already crunchy tone
+ Responds beautifully to soft playing
– Doesn't do the high-gain stuff

A simple yet likeable overdrive that keeps things natural and never gets fizzy

8/10

KEY FEATURES

Bigfoot Engineering Trouble Booster Mini

- **PRICE** £129.99
- **DESCRIPTION** Booster pedal. Made in UK
- **CONTROLS** Volume, bright/normal toggle
- **FEATURES** Buffered or true bypass (to order), powered by 9V mains supply only (not supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS** 112x60x27mm
- **CONTACT** Bigfoot Engineering 07743 075961 **bigfootengineering.com**

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Normal mode is a chunky, grungey delight
+ Plenty of middly bite in bright mode
+ Great spluttery fuzz when combined with the Thunder Pup
+ Can be a little temperamental

Two equally tasty boost effects in one unit... as long as it's willing to behave

7/10

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

King Fuzz Mini

If you think two controls for a fuzz box is extravagant, you might like the one-knob **EarthQuaker Devices Erupter** (**£155**). For added EQ and clipping options, see the **Earthquaker Jupiter V2** (**£179**)

Thunder Pup Mini

Looking for a pedal with explicit Marshall-mimicking intentions and maybe a touch more gain than the Bigfoot? Try the **Wampler Plexi-Drive** (**£189**) or **LovePedal Purple Plexi** (**£169**)

Trouble Booster Mini

The Flynn Amps Classic OC44 Booster (**£130**) is a brilliant Rangemaster-style treble booster, while the **Supro 1303 Boost** (**£189**) opens up your tonal options with a three-way filter switch

Meris
Ottobit Jr & Mercury7

Meris is a new name in digital effects, but its credentials are impressive. **RICHARD PURVIS** gets to grips with two gleaming units that promise two very different flavours of interesting

You might not know the name Terry Burton – but you'll know his work. He started out as a hardware designer at digital effects pioneer Line 6, before leaving to form Strymon, which has quickly become the darling of the high-end effects scene. He's since moved on again, to form a new company, Meris. That's some serious effects building pedigree by anyone's measure, and while Meris has focussed on building boutique studio effects modules up until now, the company's first proper effect pedals should have all of us taking notice.

As you might expect, the first two entries in the range are based on the company's 500 Series studio units, but converted to stompbox format and tweaked to suit the peculiar needs of fretboard-botherers.

The pedals are built in California, and the two share some key features: stereo ins and outs, 24-bit AD/DA conversion with 32-bit floating point DSP, switchable true or analogue buffered bypass, and the ability to use an expression pedal to control multiple parameters. They run on nine-volt power, and each one comes with a DC adaptor in the box. You could run them off a standard power supply if needed, but only if it can spare 150mA of current.

Bring in the rhythmic effects, and any semblance of 'guitariness' is blasted into hyperspace

Meris Ottobit Jr

If you include the word 'bit' in the name of your pedal, people are going to assume it's a bitcrusher… and in this case they're not wrong, but Meris is keen to stress that the Ottobit Jr does more than just pulverise your guitar sound into a mess of digital distortion. We're told it's inspired by vintage gaming consoles – and that means a variety of bleepy retro synth sounds as well as glitchy stutters.

The six knobs are best understood when split into two rows: the top three are all about lo-fi filtering, while the bottom ones deal with sequencing/stutter patterns. There's also a push-button next to the bypass footswitch to hop between sequencer types, and a tap tempo footswitch. Oh, and all the controls have secondary functions for adjusting the sequencer steps, accessed by holding down the 'alt' button above the tap switch. Now let's be honest, it's complicated stuff, and there's a 14-page manual that you may or may not be inclined to read – so expect some trial and error. But that's fine, because there's really no such thing as 'error' when your mission is destruction and chaos.

Meris Mercury7

If destruction and chaos isn't really your bag, however, you'll be more at home with the Mercury7 – a pedal that has no intention of mangling

your pure bypass tone, just sending it on its way with a light coating of reverb. Or, if you prefer, an extremely heavy one. Interestingly, rather than be inspired by classic gear or artist tones, the Mercury7 takes inspiration from the intensely atmospheric Vangelis soundtrack to 1982 sci-fi classic, *Blade Runner* – intriguing...

It's a simpler device all round than the Ottobit Jr, and even the secondary functions of the six controls are easy to understand once we've looked them up in the mini-manual that comes in the box. There are only two reverb algorithms to choose from – cathedral and plate – but the key here is the pitch vector dial, which lets you add a shimmer effect and control its harmonic interval from the source note. Also worth a mention is the swell footswitch – this suppresses the note attack for 'verby volume swells without the need for some dextrous pinkie action on the guitar volume.

In Use

It's possible, in the name of sanity, to start exploring the Ottobit Jr with the stutter and sequencer controls at zero. This way you're only hearing the filter effects – and they're quite something. Being able to control sample rate and bit depth means you can choose just how lo-fi and grainy the sound gets, from more or less pristine at one extreme to utterly crushed at the other. Combine this with the sweepable low-pass filter – especially if there's an expression pedal handy – and you've got some cracking old-school synth sounds available here.

Now we bring in the rhythmic effects, and any semblance of 'guitariness' is blasted into hyperspace. The sequencer can sound almost like a sample-and-hold filter, or an arpeggiator, or a bit of both – and the real fun comes from setting it to infinite repeats then exploring how the other controls interact. It's great for making outlandishly weird sounds with a clean guitar, even better with a distorted one, and – sorry about this – better still with something that isn't actually a guitar at all, but an analogue synth.

The Mercury7 is a return to six-string normality after all that atonal extremism. Go easy on the decay and mix controls, with the pitch vector set to 'off', and you'll have a sweet and clear reverb with the ability to fine-tune the high and low frequencies and add lush modulation to taste. However, turn everything up, including the pitch control, and a world of sci-fi strangeness opens up. You can even store two different pitch intervals at either end of your expression pedal's travel – say, an octave up and an octave down – then swoop woozily between them.

Multi-mode switching has become a pretty common feature on modern reverb pedals, but Meris has opted to not include it here, so you can't hop between three or four dramatically different sounds. However, you can store presets – just like the Ottobit you can keep up to 16 of them – provided you have an external MIDI device to call them up with.

KEY FEATURES

Meris Ottobit Jr

- **PRICE** £319
- **DESCRIPTION** Bitcrusher/filter pedal. Made in USA
- **CONTROLS** Sample rate, filter, bits, stutter, sequencer play mode, sequencer multiply (each with 'alt' functions); alt function and sequencer type switches; bypass and tap tempo footswitches
- **FEATURES** Stereo outputs, expression pedal input (also used for MIDI control); 24-bit converters, switchable true or buffered bypass; powered by 9VDC adaptor (included)
- **DIMENSIONS** 115x108x65mm
- **CONTACT** Sound Network
  0203 008 7530
  soundnetwork.co.uk
  meris.us

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ A wide range of sounds, all of them bonkers
+ Gets on well with electronic instruments as well as guitars
+ Even more fun when you add an expression pedal to the mix

– Only two presets accessible without external hardware

A versatile tool for fans of quirky noise effects, though it could hardly be more niche, it's bags of fun

8/10

KEY FEATURES

Meris Mercury7

- **PRICE** £319
- **DESCRIPTION** Reverb pedal. Made in USA
- **CONTROLS** Decay, modulation, mix, low frequency, pitch vector, high frequency (each with 'alt' functions); alt function and reverb type switches (plate or cathedral); bypass and swell footswitches
- **FEATURES** Stereo outputs, expression pedal input (also used for MIDI control); 24-bit converters, switchable true or buffered bypass; powered by 9VDC adaptor (included)
- **DIMENSIONS** 115x108x65mm

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Gloriously immense yet immaculately hi-fi reverbs
+ Can get truly otherworldly with an expression pedal

– Not as many reverb types available some other pedals out there
– As with the Ottobit Jr, preset functionality is limited

A fine-sounding reverb with a sci-fi secret weapon, but it's not the most flexible unit out there

7/10

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Meris Ottobit Jr

These are good times for people who want to mangle their guitar sound beyond recognition. Your other options include the **Catalinbread Heliotrope** (**£137**), **Red Panda Bitmap** (**£248**) and **EarthQuaker Data Corrupter** (**£225**)

Meris Mercury7

Want the best sounds at any cost? The **Strymon BigSky** (**£439**) and **Eventide Space** (**£509**) are the twin lords of the digital reverb realm. But see also the compact yet tremendously powerful **Neunaber Immerse** (**£219**)

CONTOUR
TONE
MASTER
PREAMP
RedRox
DAWNER PRINCE ELECTRONICS
HANDMADE IN CROATIA

VOLUME
ECHO REP SWELL
BASS
TREBLE
LEVEL INDICATOR
ECHO SWELL
DRUM SPEED
PLAYBACK HEADS
1 2 3 4
SWELL REPEATS
ON OFF
boonar
DAWNER PRINCE ELECTRONICS
HANDMADE IN CROATIA

POWER
INTENSITY
SPEED
VIBRATO
CHORUS
MODERN
VINTAGE
SHAPE
Viberator
DAWNER PRINCE EFFECTS
HANDMADE IN CROATIA

SOFT
HARD
DARK
BRIGHT
DETONATOR
FUSE
DAWNER PRINCE EFFECTS
HANDMADE IN CROATIA

VOLUME
WAVEFORM
SPEED
STATUS
TAP
Starka
DAWNER PRINCE EFFECTS
HANDMADE IN CROATIA

Builder **Profile**

DAWNER PRINCE ELECTRONICS

Dawner Prince's innovative fusions of digital and analogue technology have seen the Croatian boutique effects company build an impressive reputation. Founder Zoran Kraljevic charts his firm's growth from a university side project to working with none other than David Gilmour...

Q How did you first get into making effects?
"I was always into music, but I always played drums. When I went to college to study electronic engineering, I also played in a ska-punk band and my college guitarists were spending more on entertainment than on musical equipment! So, strapped for cash they asked me if, as a future electrical engineer, I could build them some amps or effects. That's when I first got into audio electronics, and I decided to build them a guitar pedal – it was a RAT clone in a clumsy enclosure, but it set me on the path!"

Q Tell us about how Dawner Prince Electronics evolved as a company to where it is today...
"After I built that RAT, I completely fell in love with audio electronics and started doing pedal and amp clones and mods for my friends. The results were great, people loved that my modifications gave sonic improvements to their gear, so I said to myself I should design my own pedal. After spending some time designing and fine tuning, the Diktator preamp/OD/distortion was born.

"That was eight years ago. Soon orders started pouring, we had great feedback, and started building a reputation. Then I designed the Starla and Red Rox pedals, and that was when my girlfriend Jelena and I decided to properly start the company – Dawner Prince Electronics Ltd. Jelena has been a part of the Dawner Prince story from the very beginning, but it was not until recently that she has become the official general manager of the company, and now I don't think I'd manage to run business without her! She has a master's degree in psychology, and so we like to say that she is the brain that overrules the heart in the decision making! [laughs]

"I didn't have some entrepreneurial masterplan when I started out, nor did I design pedals based on what market demands. I just fall in love with a particular sound, get obsessed with it, and then work on the design until I get it just right – my only guide is my ear. The funny thing is that I am not a guitarist and I still can't play it well... and I am left-handed!"

Q Why should people be interested in Dawner Prince effects pedals?
"Our effects pedals are high-end devices and we strive to maintain that level in every aspect. New approaches and innovative electronic ideas are incorporated into the circuits, making them more reliable, and endowing them with studio sound quality. We also put an emphasis on high versatility without sacrificing simplicity – Dawner Prince pedals are designed to operate equally well on stage or in the studio."

"I just fall in love with a particular sound, get obsessed with it, and then work on the design until I get it just right – my only guide is my ear"

Q What's your proudest achievement to date?
"Looking back to the fact that I started from scratch without anyone's financial support, only had one basic soldering station and multimeter, but great passion and faith in myself, making a living now from doing something I love is my greatest success.

"But If I would to choose one particular story it would certainly be an opportunity to cooperate with one of the biggest artists and guitarists of all times – Mr David Gilmour.

"I always hoped to have such big names on our artist list, but I never actually spent much time trying to contact musicians and offer them pedal endorsements. Instead, I directed all my energy into developing top quality products that would hopefully find their way to the top artists eventually.

"It was quite exciting moment when I received a call from Gilmour's guitar tech, Phil Taylor, asking about our products... or when we found out John Mayer got himself our pedal for the new tour pedalboard! They are both vintage sound lovers and they use the Boonar Multi-Head Drum Echo – Gilmour has it on both his studio and tour boards."

Q What's next for Dawner Prince?
"I am a huge fan and collector of vintage gear – old amps, Leslie speakers, tape echoes and anything with tubes! The sound those analog devices produce is unique, and that is where I find an inspiration for my creations. Besides the great sound, they had quite few limitations due to the available technology of that time. My goal is to revive those legendary units in the form of a stompbox, to model and reproduce the exact sonic characteristics and to blend it with today's modern technology by means of combining both analog and digital electronics making them more reliable, more versatile and avoiding all those limitations.

"We're currently engineering a microprocessor-based digital control platform that includes modern controllability features such as full MIDI implementation, preset options, an OLED screen and even wireless updates – that will be included in our future products. We're are also working on a new vintage-inspired pedal that should be out by the end of 2017, and the testing will be done with Phil Taylor and David Gilmour!"

For more information about Dawner Prince Electronics, visit dawnerprince.com

TONE (RAMP)
MIX
RATE
REGEN
DEPTH
TIME
TAP/AMT
S L B
TONAL RECALL
OUT
LEFT IN
RIGHT IN
LEFT OUT

Test **Pilots**

CHASE BLISS AUDIO TONAL RECALL

PART TWO

Now he's had a few months to get to grips with Chase Bliss's feature-packed analogue delay – has **PAUL GREGORY** finally managed to unearth all of its wonders?

In the first part of this test in the last edition of *The Joy Of FX*, I got some great, versatile slapback sounds out of the Tonal Recall, but it was clear I'd barely scratched the surface of what this pedal can do. Now, after a few months with it, I can say that there are an almost limitless sounds lurking inside.

To begin with, the 16 DIP switches on the back can control pretty much every function on the pedal. It's a bit technical, but Chase Bliss has made a number of YouTube videos to explain how these work, and you should definitely check them out. Once I grasped the basics and began messing about with these switches, I started to unearth some truly magical sounds.

Using the 'ramp' control or an expression pedal with the DIP switches, you can get the pedal to modulate all the top loaded controls (mix, regen, time, rate and depth). There are also DIP switches to control the nature of how they modulate, and these can be as subtle or extreme as you like. After a few weeks of playing around this I managed to conjure up all sort of different sounds – including vinyl-like warping, strange self-oscillating distortions, seemingly endless repeats, short stuttering effects, and of course beautiful ambient washes. If you set the modulation rates to be quite slow and subtle you can really get some unbelievable drones, which start to sound less like a guitar and more like an old analogue synth.

The Tonal Recall uses two MN3005 chips and the 'SLB' switch determines how many of these are in use, S for one chip which produces a very short delay, L for both chips and this produces a longer delay. If B is selected it activates both the S mode and L mode together, using this you can create washy reverb-like effects – dial in some of the modulation and things can get very eerie.

Even now, I still haven't completely got my head around everything this pedal can do. If there was one drawback to having so much functionality its that you can spend hours and hours making incredible sounds, but trying to get back to a sound you really liked an hour ago can be a little tricky. Fortunately, you can save up to two presets, and combined with the live mode this gives you three slots available. However, there are so many sounds available I really wanted to save so much more. Annoyingly, the presets themselves are also accessed by flicking the preset switch, there is no stomp switch to do it on the fly.

It does everything an analogue delay could possibly do, it's like an extension of your guitar rather than a pedal

Instead, I took to writing down the various sounds I'd found and then recreating them. In the studio this is fine, playing a gig not so much. Conveniently, Chase Bliss also makes a pedal called the Faves, which is a MIDI controller – yup, this is an analogue delay with MIDI capability... isn't the future great? The Faves lets you store six additional presets, which takes the Tonal Recall to an entirely different level. What's more, it can also be hooked up to other MIDI devices, which depending on your hardware will give you the option of saving up to 122 presets – 122 presets on an analogue delay pedal! I'm not much of a MIDI guy, but it's definitely something I'll be exploring in the future.

The Chase Bliss Tonal Recall is truly incredible – as analogue delays pedals go its a work of art. The beauty of it is that if you wanted to use it as a simple slap echo, you can, or if you want it to be an endless stream of sonic consciousness that cascades into a deluge of otherworldly lo-fi noise, you can. It does everything an analogue delay could possibly do, it begins to feel like an extension of your guitar rather than a pedal.

This is my first experience with Chase Bliss Audio, and I'll admit I was a little bit hesitant as to how I could make this work for me. I like stuff to be simple, and the DIP switches frightened me! Now though after living with it for a while, I'm completely bowled over. I've never played anything like it, and I have no intention of stopping any time soon!

Paul Gregory

- **TEST GEAR** Chase Bliss Audio Tonal Recall
- **PRICE** £399
- **BAND** Lanterns On The Lake
- **GEAR USED WITH** Eastwood Airline Coronado, Eastwood Airline H77, Ephiphone Dot, Fender ML Hot Rod DeVille 212, Motion Custom Works 4G8B1, Earthquaker Devices Avalanche Run, DigiTech DigiVerb, DigiTech DigiDelay, Line 6 DL4, Electro-Harmonix Micro POG, Way Huge Green Rhino Mk 4, Dunlop DVP1, Frederic Effects Green Russian, Fulltone 70-BC Fuzz, Strymon Big Sky, Strymon TimeLine

Strymon
Sunset Dual Overdrive

Strymon thinks it's cracked the conundrum of digital overdrive – and now it's offering two in one box. Has **RICHARD PURVIS** found the dual in the crown?

KEY FEATURES

Sunset Dual Overdrive

- **PRICE** £299
- **DESCRIPTION** Digital dual overdrive pedal. Made in USA
- **CONTROLS** Channel A level, drive and tone; channel B level, drive and tone; three-position model switch for each channel; three-position bright switch and channel-routing switch on back panel
- **FEATURES** Inputs for 'favourite' footswitch and expression pedal, adjustable noise reduction threshold; 24-bit converters, switchable true or buffered bypass; powered by 9V DC adaptor (included)
- **DIMENSIONS** 116 x 101 x 62mm
- **CONTACT** Music Psych 020 7607 6005 **www.musicpsych.com** **www.strymon.net**

Back in March we saluted Strymon for taking a run at the last big hurdle for digital signal processing – natural-sounding overdrive – and getting over it more or less intact with the Riverside Multistage Drive. Now, those crazy Californians are really going for it. The Sunset Dual Overdrive is a mid-sized stompbox that, you guessed it, offers two drives instead of one. Well, we say two... we sort of mean six.

You see, this is a twin-channel device with a choice of three sounds on each side. The two channels can each can be selected independently, or run one into the other – in either direction – or mixed in parallel. There's also a three-position brightness switch on the back, along with two extra inputs: one for an expression pedal, and one for a TRS footswitch to recall a single preset.

This is of course a digital unit, powered by a SHARC processor, but as with the Riverside there's an analogue JFET gain stage at the start – so if it makes you feel better you could say it's a hybrid.

In Use

First up on channel A is 'Ge', modelled on a germanium diode circuit with a dry parallel path – if that's not a Klone, Ed Sheeran's not ginger. This is surely the toughest challenge of the lot, as the Klon's signature overdrive is as warm, organic and un-digital as it gets... yet the Sunset gets off to an absolute stormer here. It really does capture the sweetly softened attack and rounded-out lower mids of the original, only occasionally struggling to match its delicate tonal balance.

A Klon's overdrive is as warm and un-digital as it gets, yet it really does capture the sound of the original

Next up is a low-gain Tube Screamer type that certainly fits the expected EQ profile – pronounced upper mids, disappearing bottom end – and crunches up just as it should, while the third model on this side is a simple, non-gainy treble booster. So far, so 'analogue'.

There's a lot more filth available on channel B – the two overdrives here are both quite snarly and British, the second model (a single hard-clipping stage) being just a touch more fizzy than the first (soft then hard clipping). Finally, the JFET setting provides a straight clean boost that thickens things up gently with drive cranked.

Being able to chuck one channel into the other opens up a whole range of high-gain options, most obviously when you select an overdrive on one side and a boost on the other; and the option of switching the order of the circuit makes this, in a sense, even more versatile than two pedals sitting next to each other. Our only real reservation is about the lack of tonal variety on offer – the four drive algorithms feel a little like different flavours of the same effect rather than a genuine 'greatest hits' in one box.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

The Sunset's closest analogue equivalent is the **Chase Bliss Audio Brothers** (**£349**), which also has two channels with three different sounds on each. But see also the twin-channel **Keeley D&M Drive** (**£229**), **T-Rex Mudhoney 2** (**£139**) and **Lazy J Cruiser Deuce** (**£299**)

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Six solid overdrive/boost effects in one
+ Simpler interface than the Riverside model
+ Lets you store a favourite setting
- All four overdrive sounds are similarly mids-heavy

A thoughtfully laid-out pedal with a decent range of convincingly un-digital overdrive tones

8/10

KEELEY
COMPRESSOR PLUS

The pedal that kicked off the boutique boom has gained an invisible 'Plus'. **RICHARD PURVIS** finds out what it adds up to...

Compressors make your loud bits quieter and your quiet bits louder. Not much fun on paper, is it? But the growing number of them on the market suggests a lot of people are finding plenty of fun in having their dynamics artfully squished... and for that, Robert Keeley must take some of the credit. Launched back in 2001, his take on the old Ross Compressor was arguably the breakthrough product that turned boutique pedal building into a serious industry.

The unit we're looking at today is the only compact compressor Keeley makes, and is the latest evolution of the box that – first with two knobs, then with four – made his name. It's called the Compressor Plus, although you'll have to imagine the Plus because it isn't printed anywhere on the enclosure.

We're promised this unit will sound every bit as pure and transparent as the silver-grey box that came before it – and it still is silver-grey, except for the smart black top panel. So what's been added? The two key newcomers are a toggle switch labelled 'single coil' and 'humbucker', for changing the release time; and a distinctively mismatched blend knob, letting you mix the treated signal with your bypassed sound – a useful feature that's becoming more and more popular in compressors. Oh, and there's a tone control for replacing flattened-out treble.

In Use

The three sample settings in the mini-manual include 'always on' compression, which looks tempting as a general liveliness booster...

That toggle switch is a revelation... it works so well as to make the tone control pretty much redundant

and that's exactly what it provides. Sustain is set at nine o'clock for this one and there's nothing going on that sounds obviously compressed, but it's full, sparkly and slick – and you will notice how dull and loose your bypass tone sounds as soon as you switch the pedal off.

The other two suggested settings are much less subtle, and here's where you might want to get tinkering. Everything this unit does is at least 90 per cent gorgeous, but if you push the sustain control you can easily get that unnatural thumpy effect on transient peaks. Some players might make a feature of this; others will want to pull the blend right back – which will also help to dial some low-end bloom back in if you're missing it.

That humble-looking toggle switch is a revelation. Flick it down and the release time goes from about a second to virtually instantaneous, allowing the more 'stretched out' treble content of humbuckers to shine through once the big transients have been squashed. In fact it works so well as to make the tone control pretty much redundant – we end up turning that fully down and never feel the need to touch it again, with any guitar or amp.

The Guitar Magazine VERDICT

+ Perfect for adding body and sizzle to clean tones
+ The blend knob brings added tweakability to the table
+ Surprisingly affordable
- A variable attack time might have been more useful than that tone control

A super-sweet tone-improver that's now more flexible than ever

9/10

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Feeling flush? Allow us to point you in the direction of the **Origin Effects Cali76 Compact Deluxe** (**£279**), which got a rare 10/10 score in our September issue. Other strong contenders include the **Xotic SP Compressor** (**£167**) and **Orange Kongpressor** (**£119**)

The Guitar Magazine AWARD CHOICE 9/10

KEY FEATURES

Keeley Compressor Plus

- **PRICE** £129
- **DESCRIPTION** Compressor pedal. Made in USA
- **CONTROLS** Sustain, level, blend, tone; two-way toggle switch for fast/slow release
- **FEATURES** True bypass, powered by 9V PSU (not supplied) or battery
- **DIMENSIONS** 110 x 68 x 51mm
- **CONTACT** Keeley Engineering **robertkeeley.com**

LOST IN
ICELAND
KORG
PROFESSIONAL
MODULAR EFFECTS
STEREO
MANUAL
DEPTH
SPEED
KORG
KCH-301
CHORUS
STEREO
FEEDBACK
EFFECT LEVEL
DELAY TIME
KORG
KAD-301
ANALOG DELAY
TONE
OUT LEVEL
DRIVE
KORG
KOD-101
OVER DRIVE
ATTACK
OUT LEVEL
SENSITIVITY
KORG
KCO-101
COMPRESSOR
ALL
PASS
4
3
2
1

in association with Allianz

Vintage PRIVATE COLLECTION

ELLIOTT RANDALL

The Steely Dan guitarist and session maestro has always been a player with a keen interest in discovering unusual sounds. His effects collection is a testament to that long history of effects experimentation...

Story & Photography **Lars Mullen**

In addition to being a key contributor to jazz-rock legends Steely Dan, Elliott Randall also has a hugely impressive list of studio credits – from John Lennon to Gene Simmons, via soundtrack work on 70s and 80s cinematic classics, including *The Warriors* and *Fame*. These days he continues to work as a producer and guitarist, with his pedalboard the product of a long life of varied and esoteric effects love.

"Although these days I often utilise digital technology in the studio, I also use many of the old classic foot pedal effects that have earned their place in rock and pop history over the decades," the now UK-based American explains as we sit down with Elliott in his home studio. "When I connect to some of these pedals it just takes me back to the halcyon days of the late 50s through the mid-70s – such a creative and innovative period for guitar effects!

"The advantage of computer-based amp modelling and effects is that it's all on the screen in front of us (and these can sound great) – we don't need to use pedals and ultra-loud amplifiers if we don't want to. On the other hand, there are times when doing it all old-school is the perfect way.

"One cool example of an 'old-school' unit that still cuts it today is my Korg PME40X, which I've been using since the 80s and uses bucket brigade technology. It can give me most of the sounds I'd ever need, and an added extra is the build quality – it's strong enough to have survived really well over all these years, and is still going strong."

Opposite **Elliot with his Korg PME40X multi-effects, which he's been using since the 1980s, and it's still going strong today**

Above **Elliot has been a fan of Electro-Harmonix pedals since the early days of the company, and still enjoys exploring the firm's latest eccentric effects**

Above **Elliot's board demonstrates his philosophy of fusing vintage and modern effects, with an early EHX Electric Mistress and 70s Mu-Tron sat alongside modern boxes such as the Nemphasis VT Comp and Fret-King Distortion XXX**

Effects Appeal

It's all far cry from when Elliott first began his acoustic guitar studies in 1956, then graduating to electric in 1959, and embracing both instruments.

"Effects for the electric guitar player were few and far between in those early rock 'n' roll days," he recalls. "We had some amplifiers that sported tremolo circuits, but spring reverbs needed to be purchased separately. The two biggest sellers of those early standalone reverb tanks were Fender and Premier. I had the latter. They sounded metallic, a little clunky, and aside from making you sound as though you were in a primitive-sounding chamber, the coolest trick was shaking the tank, so that you could create your own thunder-clap!

"But reverberation started elsewhere. It started in nature. Picture the sound of a voice, or anything else, coming at you from the other end of a tunnel. Yup – that's reverberation. Some studios created their own reverb using a large basement room, with the speaker at one end, and the mic at the other, to create the sound more space. Sometimes a lot more space."

By the late 50s and early 60s, electronic echo machines started to appear. Initially a studio effect that used a second tape to generate repeats of the recorded sound, but eventually became condensed into smaller units. These echo units became very popular, with the likes of the Watkins Copicat, Gibson EchoPlex and Dynachord Echolette winning fans in the UK, USA and Germany respectively.

"My personal favourite was the Binson EchoRec made in Italy," Elliott reflects. "I loved to use these both on my guitar and on vocals. I still own and use a Roland RE-501 tape echo unit, but understandably, it stays in my studio, as something with such precision mechanical parts isn't the cleverest of devices to be subjected to 'road wear and tear'."

"Folks like Jimi, Harvey Mandel and myself would hit the stage with just a fuzz, wah, and a uni-vibe"

Another common effect to be born in this era was the flanger, and Elliott remembers the early studio tricks that guitar players of the day would use to create the tell-tale sound.

"It was born by accident as we continued to experiment in the studio," he remembers. "We would use a second tape machine and rest the palm of our hand on the two flanges that held the tape reels, thus creating a much more natural psychoacoustic effect rather than electronically designed."

The fuzz pedal was one of the earliest stompboxes to really take off, and Elliott fondly recalls the newfound freedom that having a dirt at the push of a footswitch gave guitarists such as him.

"My first encounter was the purchase of a Mosrite FuzzRITE and it was a really rude sounding so and so," he chuckles. "I bought mine around 1965 or '66 and when it came time to get really raunchy, I'd kick it in.

"In the 70s I graduated to the Foxx Tone Machine, which has massively saturated fuzz tones. It was only manufactured for a few short years, built by a young circuit designer called Steve Ridinger in the USA. I have two originals which I still adore and occasionally use. I gave a third one to Peter Frampton as a present. This baby not only fuzzed you up, but it could bring your notes up an entire octave with the flick of a switch. It also had an unintended feature: when you played two different pitches, it would emulate a ring modulator, giving you the 'sum and difference' of the two notes. And when you played fifths, it would give you the lower octave! Whilst the Foxx delivered fuzz (in many differing textures), we move to more modern times with the USA built Black Cat OD-Fuzz. As its name denotes, it's a little more versatile, with the ability to deliver overdrive and fuzz separately or a mix of the two. Another fuzz/distortion fave of mine is the Fret-King Distortion XXX. I rate this one 'spectacular'!"

EHX Bomb

The 70s was a great time for effects, and it was at this time that Elliott encountered one of the pedal boom's most creative and successful entrepreneurs.

"In 1971, I was introduced to Mike Matthews, the founder of a then young company called Electro-Harmonix," Elliott remembers. "He asked me to try his new little box called the LPB-1 (Linear Power Booster). It acted very much like the gain control so that you could crunch up the channel of the amp you were using and make it a whole lot louder. We became good friends, and as the company grew, they offered the market more and more interesting, sound-altering pedals.

"Among the EHX classics I have are an early Electric Mistress flanger Deluxe, Small Stone phase shifter, the very ballsy the Big Muff fuzz along with a Polyphonic Active Generator, the EH5000 ring modulator, and the Q-Tron+ envelope filter."

Elliott's affection for Electro-Harmonix gear continues to this day, and he's often finding new and interesting sounds among the company's current eccentric portfolio.

"I also have the new Mel9, Key9 and C9 pedals where the guitar emulates strings and orchestral horns, electric piano, and organ very well indeed," he enthuses. "These new boxes supply really fine emulations. I also have an Electro-Harmonix Pitchfork, which can add two additional notes to the one you are playing. This can be really inspiring when it comes to creating wild sounds – not just octaves and fifths – but even more interestingly, you can enhance your melodic lines with whacky and unexpected harmonies."

But Elliott has always been on the lookout for new and interesting sounds, and the 70s offered a wealth of opportunities to discover cool new pedals from other brands, too...

"In 1972, Musitronics was born and the Mu-Tron III became quite the in-demand sound after Stevie Wonder used it with his electric clavinet on his hit *Higher Ground*," Elliott explains. "It's basically a very sophisticated envelope follower, and an integral part of all synthesisers. Shortly afterward, Musitronics released the Bi-Phase, which is still one of my all-time best pedals. You can hear me having fun with it on Steely Dan's *Green Earrings* – in the outro solo, as the fade begins, my guitar starts to make all sorts of unusual sounds. What fun! They released about half a dozen other pedals, each of superior sound quality and built to last. The company has since morphed into Mu-Fx, and continue to build the highest quality effects pedals.

"Then there was the Rockman X100 – definitely a unique innovation. Designed by Tom Scholz, guitarist in the band Boston, it has become a treasured period piece. At the time it was ground-breaking as an analogue multi-effects processor, and though a little noisy, it sported a really nice chorus, echo and several clean and over driven sounds, many inspired by Tom's sound in the band."

Compress Yourself

As befits any session guitarist worth his salt, compression has long been an essential component of

Below middle **The Foxx Tone Machine was a key component of Elliot's 1970s fuzz sound**

Bottom **Elliot's a big fan of EHX's more out-there effects, including the POG, EH5000 and Q-Tron+**

Above left **Elliot's collection of vintage Dan Armstrong pedals, which he's used since the 1970s**

Above right **Two flavours of wah, a vintage King Vox Wah and a Sonuus Wahoo**

Bottom left **A big fan of the original Musitronics pedals, Elliot has been charmed by the firm's latest Mu-Fx pedals**

Bottom middle **The TC Electronic Nova System gets a lot of use both in the studio and stage due to its portability, great sound quality and versatility**

Bottom right **The Rockman X100 was an innovative analogue multi-effects unit designed by Boston guitarist Tom Sholz**

Elliott's pedalboard, and he's used a variety of different units over the years.

"These days, my pedalboard-based compressor of choice is the Nemphasis VT Comp," he observes. "In two words – 'smooth and extraordinary'. Going way back in time though, my first fave compressor box was the Dan Armstrong Orange Squeezer from 1973. It's been a consistent mainstay in country music for pedal-steel, B-benders, and the like. It offered a particular smoothness and very long hold that gave these instruments a lovely sustain. It sported nothing but an on-off switch on the outside, and the one available control was buried on the inside of the unit – one tiny thumb screw which adjusted the compression ratio. Period! The Dan Armstrong range of these mini-boxes also included the Purple Peaker, Red Flanger and Yellow Humper, which I've also got.

Wah has also been a mainstay of Elliot's effects collection, and shows no signs of stopping. "Another staple in the ol' arsenal, continuing to stand the test of time," he chuckles. "It's a simple tone filter, it adjusts a much wider area of frequency than the tone control on a guitar. It can travel from sounding muted and dull to the other end – ear bleeding sharp-trebly. I still have a King Vox Wah, which to me, actually sounds pretty much the same as most of the others from that early period.

"I also enjoy the more modern Sonuus Wahoo pedal which, through the miracle of digital technology, offer great sounding old-school 'wha' – in addition to myriad other filtering effects."

Live & Kicking

Elliott certainly has a big choice of pedals that he can use for his live board, but when it comes to playing out, he prefers to keep things quite minimal.

"If we're talking purely analogue, as you can see I have a big selection," he admits, "But dependent on the task at hand, I will only employ a few at any given time, if at all!

"The TC Electronic Nova System is a cool piece of kit for the studio and the stage. It's compact, light, and supplies virtually all the sound effects you might ever need. It works particularly well in an amplifier's send and return loop. Over the past three years, it's been a good friend. And it has a RedBox output setting, too.

"One of my favourite words is 'appropriateness'. Owning loads of effects doesn't mean that one needs to use them. There are times and places. Another fave word is 'gratuitous' – if you don't need it, don't use it! Pre-pedal boards, folks like Jimi, Harvey Mandel and myself would hit the stage with just a fuzz, a wah, and maybe a uni-vibe. If there was no gaffer tape, they'd just move about the stage, pulled by the various cables attached. Primitive and effective!

While he's obviously an effects disciple, when it comes to Elliot's most famous guitar moment, he found he didn't need any at all...

"A question I'm frequently asked is, 'What pedal did you use on *Reelin' In The Years*?'" he observes. "Well, I didn't use any. It was my '63 Strat a long cable, and straight into a very loud amplifier, mic'd just right. Just goes to show you..."

EarthQuaker Devices
Handmade in Akron, Ohio Since 2005

INTRODUCING

Data Corrupter

The Devil's In The Data

A wild, yet repeatable three-voice Modulated Monophonic Phase-Locked Loop (PLL) Harmonizer, the **Data Corrupter** takes your input signal and brutally amplifies it into a crushing square wave fuzz tone.

That signal is then multiplied, divided and modulated to create a harmonically complex, expressive and touch-responsive analog synth tone up to three octaves below (or above) the original signal, plus additional harmonies for even more creative flow.

Each and every Data Corrupter is built one-at-a-time by a team of ensigns aboard the Starship Enterprise locked in orbit around the Borg Cube of Akron, Ohio, USA.

Make it so. Engage.

www.earthquakerdevices.com/data-corrupter

KMA MACHINES

LOOKS THAT KILL, TONES THAT THRILL

Boutique pedals hand-made in Berlin, Germany

UK Distribution by the Audio Distribution Group / Filling Distribution alliance - **Building Brands Together**
sales@audiodistributiongroup.com

Audio Distribution Group | FILLING DISTRIBUTION

ANTHEM PUBLISHING